THE COMMUNIST

XII JANUARY, 1933 No. 1

SURPLUS DUPLICATE

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For the Study of the Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I.

Pamphlet Containing Thesis and Resolutions

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Forward In the Line of the Twelfth Plenum of the E. C. C. I.

> "With a distinctness unprecedented in history, American capitalism is exhibiting now the effects of the inexorable laws of capitalist development, the laws of decline and downfall of capitalist society. The general crisis of capitalism is growing more rapidly than it may seem at first glance. The crisis will shake also the foundation of the power of American imperialism." (From the Address by the E.C.C.I. to the Members of the C.P.U.S.A., May, 1929).*

ENTERING the fourth year of the crisis, it is worth while to remind ourselves of the accurate forecast of this crisis by the Communist International. Already in 1928, the Sixth World Congress had proclaimed the beginning of the "third period" of post-war capitalism, the period of new wars and revolutionary upheavals. This was concretized for the American Party, as quoted above, during the following year. When those words were written, capitalism in this country was at the peak of its boom, was full of arrogance and confidence in its own strength. But the keen weapon of Marxian-Leninist analysis enabled our World Party to penetrate beneath the surface of events, and already to foresee the impending crash which broke upon the world shortly after, in October, 1929.

This was even more sharply expressed by Comrade Stalin, in his speech of May 6, 1929, when he declared:

> "I think the moment is not far off when a revolutionary crisis will develop in America. And when a revolutionary crisis develops in America, that will be the beginning of the end of world capitalism as a whole. It is essential that the American Communist Party should be capable of meeting that historical moment fully prepared of assuming the leadership of the impending class struggles in America."†

At that time the leadership of the C.P.U.S.A. was in the hands of Lovestone, Pepper and others, who stood on the platform of the international right wing, which fought against the decisions of the Sixth World Congress. Only through intransigent struggle against the right wing, liquidating the long standing factionalism, winning the membership, isolating the degenerate leaders and driving out of those unable to correct themselves, was the C.P.U.S.A. brought on the the road of Bolshevization, to preparation for the leadership of decisive class battles.

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* See pamphlet *On the Road to Bolshevization* 10c.

†See pamphlet *Stalin's Speeches On the American Party* 15c.

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In mobilizing our Party and the working class today, when the period of relative capitalist stabilization has conclusively ended, when already the crisis is assuming catastrophic forms, we have again the guidance of our World Party, in the decisions of the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. In applying the Twelfth Plenum resolutions to American problems, we must emphasize that for us also the slogan, "Greater Bolshevik fire against opportunism," is the central point. A review of this struggle for the Bolshevization of the Communist Party is all the more important since the Twelfth Plenum was obliged to take note of "a new international platform of the right, which Comrade Humbert Droz submitted . . . because we deal here with an *international platform* which is a direct continuation of that struggle against the general line of the Communist International which the rights and conciliators carried on at the time of the turn from the second period to the third period in 1928-29. At the present time we deal here with a new international right opportunist platform, at a period of a new political turn of the Communist vanguard. The Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. must call upon all of the sections of the Communist International to exercise greatest watchfulness in the preparation of the masses for decisive revolutionary struggles and for merciless struggle against the reviving right opportunism, a struggle against this main danger as well as against its feeding 'left' sectarianism which leads to passivity, to refusal to participate in revolutionary struggle, to a capitulation before social democracy."

The new stage which gave rise to the attempted re-emergence of an international right platform is a stage characterized by the Twelfth Plenum in the following words:

> "The sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism is preceding with enormous strides which are carrying this crisis to a new stage. . ."

The Twelfth Plenum characterized the fundamental changes taking place by the following facts: 1) The increase of the relative importance of the Soviet Union which has completely established itself in the positions of Socialism, increasing the degree of economic independence in relation to the capitalist world, with consequent revolutionizing influence on the toilers and exploited of all countries. 2) In the capitalist world the extreme sharpening of the economic crisis, the growing revolutionary upsurge of the masses, sharpening struggle of the colonial peoples against the imperialists, further sharpening of the antagonisms between the imperialist powers, and intensified preparation for a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union. 3) The extreme difficulty in the conditions of the

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general crisis of capitalism to overcome the economic crisis in the way that is usual for capitalism in the period of free competition.

> "All these facts taken together completely confirm the estimate of the tendencies of development given in the decisions of the Tenth and Eleventh Plenums of the E.C.C.I., and also reveal, in the course of the development of the general crisis of capitalism, a definite *change*, a peculiar swaying of the antagonistic forces, very rapid in some places and slow in others. In certain extremely important key points, the antagonistic forces are already becoming unleashed for the conflict. The end of relative capitalist stabilization has come. But a directly revolutionary situation has not yet arisen in the important and decisive capitalist countries. What is taking place at the present moment is the *transition* to a new round of big clashes between classes and between states, a new round of wars and revolutions."

Capitalism will not collapse automatically. We cannot assume a fatalistic attitude. The Twelfth Plenum E.C.C.I. resolution in emphasizing the great significance of the fact that relative capitalist stabilization has ended at the same time states:

> "This, however, does not imply that capitalism will break down automatically; it implies the inevitable further growth of the revolutionary upsurge and a further sharpening of the fundamental antagonisms which drive the bourgeoisie to seek a violent solution of these antagonisms both within their own countries and on the international arena."

In the United States the upsurge of the revolutionary movement, although developing, is still greatly lagging behind the high intensity of the whole international situation. This must by no means, however, be understood as a necessary or permanent condition. It may be rapidly changed, not only by the impact of the objective revolutionizing factors, but especially by the improved Bolshevik quality of the work of the Communist Party in mobilizing and organizing the struggles of the masses. Comrade Gussev emphasized this point in his speech at the Twelfth Plenum when he said:

> "Three years of monstrous economic crisis . . . has called forth intense upheavals which assume . . . such a catastrophic character that one cannot exclude the possibility of the U.S.A. or Great Britain or Australia pushing forward to the front with regard to the swing of the revolutionary demonstrations of the proletariat and the masses of workers in general. In such a case it will be up to the parties in the Anglo-American countries to prepare the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship, which implies the same direct practical tasks confronting now the Communist Parties of Poland and Germany."

In the "undeclared" but bloody war of Japan against China, the seizure of Manchuria, and the wars in Latin America, we are al-

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ready witnessing the first battles in the impending imperialist world war. "The intensification of the imperialist antagonisms *is* the tendency in the camp of imperialism to settle these antagonisms at the expense of the U.S.S.R." In this increasing drive toward war by the imperialist world, the United States plays the leading role. In the two fields of active war, Latin America and the Pacific, the United States appears as a chief contender. "The agglomeration of antagonisms in the Pacific form the chief hot-bed for breeding a new imperialist world war."

In the Pacific the United States is conducting its struggle against expanding Japanese imperialism through its puppet, the Nanking government of Chiang Kai Chek. The recent action of the Federal Farm Board in extending a credit of $8,000,000 worth of wheat and flour to Chiang Kai Chek is nothing but a provisioning of the Nanking armies for the struggle against the Chinese Soviets, and simultaneously to protect American imperialist interests against the encroachments of Japan. At the same time the U.S.A. "is striving to provoke war between Japan and the Soviet Union in order that, by weakening both Japan and the U.S.S.R., it may strengthen its own position in the Pacific."

The wars in Latin America express the main contradiction in the imperialist camp—between England and the United States. Bolivia and Paraguay are fighting out the conflicting interests of Uncle Sam and John Bull. The same is true of the war between Colombia and Peru.

The maneuvers of American imperialism in relation to the war debts and the League of Nations is a part of the regrouping of powers in preparation of war. It is designed to break up the diplomatic combination of England, France and Japan which is directed against the United States. This is the reason for American insistence on carrying on conversations with each European debtor power separately. The debt question, the reparation question, the Versailles Treaty, the struggle around the Lytton Commission report, the wars in Manchuria and Latin America—are all of the problems which reflect the imperialist contradictions and constitute a great knot of world antagonisms.

In mobilizing for war the bourgeoisie is letting loose a campaign of chauvinist propaganda as is clearly seen around the discussion of the debt question. The bourgeoisie is covering up its war maneuvers and preparations with pacifist gestures and phrases. It is our task "to expose all the measures of the home policy of the bourgeoisie in preparation for war, expose the production of transport of munitions for imperialist countries, to remind the masses of all the

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calamities of the first imperialist war, to fight tirelessly against the mlitarizaton of the schools."

In the feverish preparations of war against the Soviet Union, by world imperialism, the American bourgeoisie is increasing its campaign of slander against the Soviet Union. We must counteract this mobilization campaign of the bourgeoisie by reacting actively to all manifestations of the anti-Soviet campaign, to seriously improve the propaganda of the success of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. amongst the broadest masses, to popularize the peace policy of the U.S.R.R., to mobilize the masses for the active defense of the U.S.S.R., Chinese people and the Chinese Soviet revolution.

* * *

One of the most important signs of the end of relative capitalist stabilization is the growth of the revolutionary upsurge, is the growing struggles on the part of the workers and sections of the population and colonial peoples oppressed by finance capital.

The growth of the revolutionary upsurge expressed itself in the United States in "big strikes and unemployed demonstrations, the march of the war veterans to Washington and the militant actions of the farmers." These facts raise more immediately the fundamental task of the C.P.U.S.A., the winning of the majority of the working class. This can be accomplished only by "directing the main blows against social democracy, this social mainstay of the bourgeoisie," and only thus "will it be possible to strike at and defeat the chief class enemy of the proletariat—the bourgeoisie."

It is necessary to expose and destroy the illusion carefully nurtured by the reformist misleaders that they are a part of the resistance of the working class to the development of fascism. Fascism and social fascism (social democracy, reformist leaders) are equally instruments of the capitalist dictatorship. They represent merely a division of labor and alternative methods of capitalist rule, on the one hand, the open violent offensive against the toiling masses, and on the other hand, the systematic deception of the masses behind the mask of democracy, operating under the slogan of the lesser evil, social fascism is everywhere preparing the way for the open fascist dictatorship. In Europe the crisis and the revolutionary upsurge under the leadership of the Communist Parties has already resulted in the decline of the mass influence of social fascism. It would be a mistake, however, to mechanically apply this general truth to the United States. In America the masses are only now beginning to break away from the open capitalist parties on a broad scale. Due to the weaknesses of our Party, especially in regard to its persistence in old sectarian errors, social fascism as represented by the Socialist

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Party, is still expanding its mass influence and constitutes an ever-increasing danger to the development of the revolutionary mass struggle against the capitalist offensive. "Only by taking fully into account the variety of the forms, of the policy and maneuvers of the social fascists in all their concreteness will the Communists be able to really expose and isolate the social fascists."

The struggle for the majority of the working class, the struggle to isolate social fascism, calls for the intensification of our Bolshevik mass work, and unhesitatingly war against sectarianism, which in the C. P., U.S.A., is the main general source of the right danger, which is the chief danger, and "left" errors. The Twelfth Plenum, therefore, has emphasized that the Communist Parties "must extend and strengthen *permanent and intimate* contact with the majority of the workers wherever workers may be found."

Especially important under present conditions is the growing resistance of the toiling masses to the attacks being made upon their living standards. The resulting economic fights bring the workers into conflict with all the forces of the bourgeoisie, their state apparatus, with the social fascists and reformist trade union bureaucracy. This makes it possible to revolutionize the struggle for everyday demands more than ever before, to raise these struggles into higher and higher stages, converting them into direct political struggles against the capitalist system itself. As the Twelfth Plenum resolution points out:

> "The struggle for the elementary needs of the masses brings them into conflict with the very foundation of the existence of capitalism." Therefore, "The main link which the Communist Parties must seize upon in solving this problem is the struggle for the every-day economic and political interests of the broad masses against the increasing poverty, against oppression, violence and terror."

The application of the policy of the united front from below is the *key* in mobilizing the masses for struggle on the basis of their every day needs. This means that on the basis of *partial demands*, we must learn to mobilize for economic struggles, reformist workers, religious workers, workers belonging to the open bourgeois parties. Since the Twelfth Plenum of our Central Committee we have been speaking about the importance of raising partial demands. How does it come then, that our shop work has hardly advanced and only in very few instances gone forward? Precisely, because we have not learned how to penetrate the shops, and in those shops where we have contact and organization our partial demands lacked concreteness and were not connected with the systematic application of the policy of the united front from below.

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The concrete application by our Party of the Twelfth Plenum resolution calls for an immediate and decisive improvement in our shop work. Our work in the shops is one of the most important levers in doing away with sectarianism, in carrying out the main task set by our Central Committee in its Fourteenth Plenum resolution to "overcome the isolation of the Party from the decisive masses of the American proletariat".

The opportunities for work in the reformist unions are greater now than ever before. "The sharp contraction of the material basis of reformism" enables us through our independent leadership, through the correct application of the policy of the united front, to set in motion the workers in the reformist unions for big battles. The resistance to work in reformist unions must be completely and decisively liquidated. The struggle for unemployment insurance in the A. F. of L. locals initiated by the T.U.U.L. has found a wide response. This only emphasizes our great possibilities. The perspective for growing strike struggles only emphasizes the need of our work in the reformist unions. The long list of the most recent betrayals of the railroad workers without any sign of *organized* opposition on the part of the railroad workers to the treacheries of the leaders of the railroad brotherhoods, is due primarily to the almost complete absence of our activities within the railroad brotherhoods.

Without shop work, without work in the reformist unions, we will not be able to build the revolutionary unions. The revolutionary unions have a most excellent opportunity for growth at the present time. Their growth is, however, stifled by opportunism. Inability to correctly apply the policy of the united front to the workers still in the U.M.W., the underestimation of social fascism, particularly "left" social fascism, is for instance responsible for the growth of the influence of the social fascists in the Southern Illinois coal fields and the stagnation of the revolutionary opposition there. It is true that here and there we have made certain advances in the trade unions: ship struggles and mass activities in the Marine Workers Industrial Union, the Trenton strike, the fur workers' strike, advance in some of the A. F. of L. locals and unions, but these are still exceptions and not the rule. They merely emphasize the neglected opportunities for a general advance all along the line. The decision, therefore, of the Fourteenth Plenum of our Central Committee that "the radical improvement of the situation in the revolutionary unions is the *key task* of the Party" still holds good. The concrete application of the line of the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. must bring about an immediate improvement in this respect.

The Twelfth Plenum resolution of the E.C.C.I. points out that

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social fascism in order to retain its influence, in order to prevent and throttle the growing struggles of the workers, is increasing its maneuvers, increasing the use of "left" phrases. (In this connection it is also important to mention the "left" maneuvers of the A. F. of L. leadership at the recent Cincinnati convention.) This is not sufficiently understood by our Party. This was clearly seen in the failure to grasp the meaning of the social fascists leading strikes in order to behead them, particularly "left" social fascists. (Lawrence, Paterson, Southern Illinois strikes.) In our struggle against social fascism, when the attempt was made to apply the united front policy, a most serious error was made in failing to understand that only on the basis of a "*strict differentiation between social democratic leaders* and workers will the Communists be able, by means of the united front from below, to break down the wall which often separates them from the social democratic workers". This failure to differentiate between reformist leaders and workers explains why we have made such serious mistakes in strike struggles, in our unemployed work (early wrong attitude toward the councils organized by the Muste groups, also in New York for instance "ignoring" unemployed councils built by the Socialists). In the application of the policy of the united front we must also guard ourselves against the tendency of the "opportunist slurring over of differences of principles in applying the tactic of the united front" and "opportunist capitulation to the reformist trade union bureaucrats (unity at any price)", as in the case of Comrade Verblin of Chicago.

The National Hunger March has improved the struggle for the partial demands of the unemployed. In order to mobilize for struggle the continuously growing army of the unemployed, we must clearly recognize that "the most serious shortcoming in the mass work of the Communist Parties among the unemployed has been the insufficient attention paid to the organization of the struggle for the partial demands of the unemployed". Our unemployment movement also suffers from the fact that it "has been left without proper revolutionary leadership". This, as the Twelfth Plenum points out "has to a certain degree been taken advantage of by the Social Democrats and fascists". The open or concealed indifference on the part of some elements in the revolutionary trade union movement to the organization of the unemployed must be liquidated. Where the Party has conducted a struggle against some of the comrades who have "theorized" regarding this indifference and neglect on the part of the adherents of the revolutionary trade union movement in organizing the unemployed, this has resulted in the correction of such an attitude and in an improvement in the unemployed work of the T.U.U.L. unions and opposition groups. There still exists

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in the Party unclarity on the organizational forms of work amongst the unemployed and the development of broad forms of mass activities in the organization of the unemployed. The decisions of the Prague resolution on unemployed work and the decisions of the October, 1931 Central Committee resolution on unemployed work have not been sufficiently carried out. Our Party has completely neglected the work among the unemployed youth and women. The growing army of the homeless boys wandering over the country is more than a dramatic expression of the conditions of the unemployed youth. The following statement from the Twelfth Plenum Resolution applies with full force to our Party:

> " . . . the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade unions must wage a determined struggle against the mass dismissals of young workers and married women workers and devote serious attention to strengthening the work among unemployed women and unemployed youth."

* * *

The mass activities for the defense of the Scottsboro boys, the dramatization of the struggle for Negro rights in the election campaign, the activities in the organization of the unemployed Negro masses in the North, the joint struggles of the Negro and white unemployed workers in Birmingham, the beginnings of organization amongst the share croppers in the South (Camp Hill and Tallapoosa) has brought the Party closer to the Negro masses. The struggle which the Party is carrying on against white chauvinism and for the Leninist teaching of the Negro question as a national question, has helped, in the development of the recent struggle amongst the Negro masses.

The greatest weakness in our struggle for the Negro masses is the lack of local struggles for the everyday economic and political demands of the Negro masses. The revolutionary trade unions and the T.U.U.L. generally have not seriously taken up the struggle for the Negro workers in the industries and have not become "the real channels of Negro work" (Fourteenth Plenum resolution). While our influence has increased amongst the Negro masses as a result of our general struggle for Negro rights, this, however, has been limited, because we really did not apply the policy of the united front amongst the Negro masses. The Negro reformists have increased their treacherous acivities in order to arrest the growing influence of the Party and the growing upsurge on the part of the Negro masses. The insufficient concrete exposure of the Negro reformists weakened our fight for the Negro masses. The lack of consistent struggle against white chauvinism and the still existing un-

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clarity with regard to the national revolutionary character of the Negro question, is one of the great obstacles in the struggle for Negro rights and in the fight against national reformism.

The beginnings of the national revolutionary liberation struggles on the part of the Negro masses are sharpening the crisis of American capitalism. The Negro question at the present time constitutes one of the most dangerous sectors in the American imperialist home front.

Only on the basis of the struggle for the line of the Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. will we succeed in mobilizing the Party for mass work. The persistence of sectarianism, the repetition of mistakes, are precisely due to the fact that we do not carry on a systematic struggle against opportunism in practice. Resolutions remain on paper because we do not develop the political initiative of the Party membership, because we do not involve politically the Party membership in the struggle against opportunist deviations. The habit has developed in our Party of practicing self-criticism by "preaching" it. The Bolshevik test of and principle for self-criticism lies in self-correction. Bolshevik self-criticism which does not lay the basis—does not lead to self-correction must of necessity degenerate into phrasemongering, becomes mere confessionalism and a substitute for real self-criticism and self-correction—a positive hindrance to the work.

The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Plenums of our Central Committee have emphasized the need for developing a correct mass policy. The Communist International in guiding our Party in the struggle to overcome sectarianism—in the struggle against opportunism, has continually stressed the need of developing a correct mass policy. Our Party must indeed take heed of the statement of the Twelfth Plenum resolution that "The correct Bolshevik mass policy can be carried out only in the irreconcilable struggle against the right opportunism as the chief danger and against "left" deviations for the line of the Comintern".

The development of struggles in the shops, in the reformist unions, cannot take place without a simultaneous struggle against opportunism in practice. Sectarian habits and methods of work can be broken only if we carry on a struggle against them on the basis of political enlightenment, on the basis of dealing concretely with the various manifestations of the sectarian habits and methods of work. In the struggle against opportunism in the development of strike struggles, in our strike strategy, in the organization and preparation of strikes, more study and utilization must be made of the C. I. resolution on "The Lessons of Strike Struggles in the U.S.A." In the fight against the right danger and the "left" deviations, we

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should also be guided by the following point emphasized in this strike resolution "that *without a most serious struggle for the material outcome, there can be no prospect of political success* in the strike". The growing resistance of the workers to the capitalist offensive, the growing restiveness of the workers in the reformist unions, creates the basis and calls for adopting a perspective of growing strike struggles. Such a perspective, with the development of a correct strike strategy, and the recognition of the necessity of the organization and preparation of strike struggles, will enable the Party to organize and lead strikes and not to appear on the scene after a strike breaks out. It will lessen the element of spontaneity in the development of strike struggles. To make the need for organization a substitute for developing independent leadership, for leading strikes, will only aid the social fascists to lead strikes in order to behead them. (East Ohio and Southern Illinois coal strikes.) The perspective for growing strike struggles call for a correct application of the policy of the united front, for correct strike strategy, for a thorough and conscientious organization and preparation of strike struggles.

The Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. on "Lessons of Economic Struggles" gives the key for the correction of our mistakes. It states:

> "The chief shortcomings and weaknesses of the leadership of the economic struggles of the proletariat by the red trade unions, which arise in the main from the absence of a firm and practical line for the independent leadership of economic struggles, from the extremely insufficient contacts with the masses, from the existence of considerable relics of social democratic (in some countries, anarcho-syndicalist) methods of work, have found expression in the inability in most cases to decide on the concrete moment for commencing a struggle, the narrowness of the organizational basis in the red trade unions, the absence, even now, of a serious organizational basis in the factories, the extremely poor development of democracy in the trade unions, and the smallness and political weakness of the cadres which is due to this."

When finance capital, when the bankers have openly begun to "balance the budget" of the leading industrial cities, by cutting heavily charity relief, this was in many cases "overlooked". It took months to decide upon initiating the movement for the National Hunger March. Hesitation, waverings, lack of decisiveness characterized the early discussions regarding the National Hunger March. The argument that the National Hunger March will be a substitute for local struggles, that it will limit and stifle the development of local struggles, has been completely destroyed by the National Hunger March which will be recorded as one of the heroic, mili-

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tant and most effective class battles in the United States. How much more successful and far-reaching would the Hunger March have been if there had been no hesitation and opposition to it! The National Hunger March has in a concentrated manner expressed the growing radicalization of the masses. It has helped to draw in new layers of workers. It drew in a section of Socialist and A. F. of L. workers and even some of their local organizations. It raised the struggle of the unemployed to a higher level. It developed on the background of local struggles for the most elementary needs of the unemployed. This assured its progress in spite of untold obstacles. The National Hunger March has in turn stimulated the development of local struggles. It made a dent in our sectarianism. The National Hunger March also disclosed and further empasized our sectarianism. The weaknesses in creating a far broader base for the Hunger March, the hesitations and opposition which existed to the Hunger March, can be overcome by utilizing the favorable opportunities created by the National Hunger March, in further developing local struggles, in the struggle for unemployment insurance, in isolating the semi-fascists and social fascists from the mass of the unemployed.

The sharpness of the present crisis, and one of the factors which brought about the end of a relative capitalist stabilization is the important point established by Comrade Stalin that "in the course of the development of the economic crisis, the industrial crisis in the chief capitalist countries has not simply coincided, but has become *interwoven* with the agricultural crisis in the agrarian countries, aggravating the difficulties and predetermining the inevitability of the general decline in economic activity". The recent farmers strike was an expression of the growing upsurge among the farmers caused by the severity of the crisis and the growing oppression of the farmers by finance capital. The Party has for years underestimated and neglected the development of mass work among the toiling farmers. A beginning in overcoming this opportunist sectarian attitude was made in politically initiating and supporting the recent farmers' conference held in Washington. This farmers' conference was a broad united front conference. The delegates represented all sections of the country. Negro share croppers and tenant farmers were present and participated in the work of the conference. It laid the basis for struggles and exposure of the "farm progressive block" (their pet allotment bills and Roosevelt's farm demagogy) in Congress, and the leaders in the various farm organizations. The delegates were leaders in the struggle against evictions, against the bankers. The conference took place on the basis of the development of local struggles. The broad character of the conference,

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the broad contacts it established with the small farmers was a result of the correct application of the policy of the united front. But here, too, there was a great deal of hesitation and opposition to the calling of such a conference. Here, too, the arguments were made that it will stifle the local struggles, etc. Here, as well as in the case of the National Hunger March, opportunist fear of the masses created obstacles in initiating broad united front movements.

Very serious errors were made by the Party in our struggle against imperialist war, in the fight for the defense of the Soviet Union and the Chinese people. Mistakes were made due to the failure to apply the Leninist teaching of "fighting one's own imperialism", and in the failure to apply the line of the C. I. in the struggle against war that . . . the growing antagonism of interests between the imperialists does not diminish, but, on the contrary, increases the danger of a war of intervention against the U.S.S.R." the mistakes on the war question were also due to the failure to apply the line established by the Fourteenth Plenum of our Central Committee which pointed out that the growing conflicts between the imperialist powers and the war preparations against the Soviet Union "sharply raises in this situation, before the international proletariat *above all* the greatest danger of coming intervention of the imperialist powers against the U. S. S. R., the world proletarian fatherland". The greatest weakness was the failure to sustain and develop the struggle against war begun around the seizure of Shanghai and raise it to higher levels. We are not sufficiently mobilizing the masses against the growing wars in Latin America. Our Party is also very slow in developing mass support for the growing struggles of the oppressed peoples in the Philippines, Haiti, Nicaragua. Opportunism in practice is particularly prevalent in the struggle against imperialist war. In the mobilization of the masses against imperialist war, we must popularize the teachings of Lenin, digest and apply the line of the C. I. resolutions and eliminate opportunism in practice.

The resolution of the Central Committee on the Lessons of the Bonus March has already taken up the serious opportunist errors manifested in our attitude to the Bonus March. First, the opposition to the march itself; secondly failure to see its broad character by limiting it primarily to the unemployed, to industrial workers and excluding the impoverished farmers and sections of the impoverished petty bourgeoisie. The influences of the serious opportunist errors manifested around the development of the first Bonus March must be eliminated in order to successfully apply the policy of the united front in mobilizing the veterans for struggle for the bonus and against cuts in veterans' compensation.

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The seriousness of opportunism in our mass work can best be understood by the fact that it showed itself precisely in these mass movements and struggles which characterize the revolutionary upsurge in the U. S. A. "big strikes and unemployed demonstrations, the march of the war veterans to Washington, and the militant actions of the farmers". It was the valuable aid and guidance of the C. I., the struggle on the part of the Central Committee for the Hunger March, for the Farmers Conference, which enabled us to develop contacts and leadership with these mass movements.

We must carry on a struggle against *sectarianism, which in our Party, is the basis for* reviving right opportunism, which is the chief danger, and against the "left" deviation. Only on this basis will we be successful in carrying out the main tasks set by the C. I. for its American section as stated in the Twelfth Plenum resolution of the E. C. C. I.

> "The American Party must mobilize the masses and concentrate chiefly on the struggle: 1) for social insurance, against wage cuts, for immediate assistance for the unemployed; 2) for assistance for the ruined farmers; 3) for equal rights for the Negroes and the right of self-determination for the Black Belt; 4) for the defense of the Chinese people and the Soviet nion. It is necessary to carry out the decision on the turn in the work of the Party and the Trade Union Unity League."

* * *

The building of the Party, the struggle to overcome fluctuation and increase recruiting, the rooting of the Party in the shops, the building of shop nuclei, the development of political life in the units of the Party has not made progress in any way commensurate with the favorable conditions since the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Plenums of our Central Committee. It is necessary again to reiterate the line established by the Fourteenth Plenum which has not been carried out that "The work of the *lower Party organizations* must be basically changed. Nine-tenths of all the work of the lower organizations must be concentrated directly *on the work among the masses*, and not, as at present, in countless inner meetings. The center of gravity must be shifted to the development of the lower organizations, to the sections and units. The methods of leadership, assistance and of checking up on the work of the lower organizations by the higher organs must be a method of personal guidance in accordance with the special conditions of the given field of work, of the given enterprise and not simply the sending out of circulars. In all lower organizations, committees must be formed which actually work collectively, and a stop must be put to the state of affairs in which the work is concentrated in the hands of a few

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comrades. *The main basis of the work and development of the lower Party organizations is the work in the factory.*"

The training of cadres, the development of inner Party democracy, the training of new members, the raising of the political level of the Party are points emphasized by the Twelfth Plenum which are of special importance for our Party. The Twelfth Plenum resolution states that "A chain of Party schools must be organized for the purpose of educating the newly recruited Party members and the new cadres who must also be drawn into the every day revolutionary work among the broad masses. Inner Party democracy, Bolshevik self-criticism, the discussion of the most important political problems in the lower Party organization, concrete leadership of their work, all this must be the basis of all Party activity. This also is a necessary condition for strengthening iron Bolshevik discipline in the ranks of the Party."

Our mistakes in the fight against imperialist war, on the Negro question, in the Bonus March, in neglecting the farmers, the mistakes of united front policy, are also a result of the low theoretical level of our Party, the failure to popularize Marxism-Leninism and the teachings of Comrade Stalin. Our Party made a serious error in failing to sufficiently popularize the letter of Comrade Stalin at the time of its publication. The voices of revisionism of Marxism-Leninism are increasing, the Socialist Party in carrying out its "left" maneuvers is draping itself in Marxian phrases. In view of our failure in the past to sufficiently popularize, to explain and apply Comrade Stalin's letter, our Party must particularly carry out the decision of the Twelfth Plenum that "A relentless struggle must be waged against all distortions of Marxism-Leninism, for the purity of Party theory in the spirit outlined in Comrade Stalin's letter. Propaganda must be carried on for the principles of Communism, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the Soviet State."

The Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. is of the greatest historical significance. The end of relative capitalist stabilization has opened up the "transition to a new round of big clashes between classes and between states, a new round of wars and revolutions". American imperialism, American capitalism, plays a specific and important part in this transition. It is our duty as the American section of the C. I. to truly become the Bolshevik vanguard of the struggling toilers in the United States.

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Struggle for Elementary Needs—The Main Link In Winning the Masses

TO THE STUDY OF THE E.C.C.I. TWELFTH PLENUM RESOLUTION ON THE LESSONS OF ECONOMIC STRIKES AND THE STRUGGLES OF THE UNEMPLOYED

By JACK STACHEL

I.

"The economic struggle of the proletariat is assuming more and more a *revolutionary* character, and combining, in an increasing number of cases with the various elements and forms of political activity, is at the present stage, in the overwhelming majority of capitalist countries, the *fundamental line* for leading the masses to the forthcoming big revolutionary battles. *The greatest possible development and strengthening* of the struggle of the proletariat against wage cuts and the worsening of the conditions of labor, the exertion of all the efforts of the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union organizations to insure the independent leadership of the strike struggles and the unemployed movement, the raising of the fighting capacity of the masses, leading them on the basis of their own experience from the struggle for the everyday partial demands to the struggle for the general tasks of the proletariat, represent the *chief tasks* for all sections of the Communist International, especially under the conditions of the end of capitalist stabilization."

THE above section of the resolution shows how much importance the E.C.C.I. attaches to the development of the economic struggle. It shows to us that this is so precisely because the Comintern has proven that "the end of relative capitalist stabilization has come. . . . What is taking place is the *transition* to a new round of big clashes between classes and between states, a new round of wars and revolutions." The E.C.C.I. in making the analysis of the present crisis and its development points out that "this, however, does not imply that capitalism will break down automatically." And because capitalism will not break down automatically the E.C.C.I. further states, "precisely because little time remains before the revolutionary crisis matures is it necessary without losing a moment to *intensify and accelerate our Bolshevik mass work* to win the majority of the working class to increase the revolutionary activity of the

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working class." This means that, to talk of the end of capitalist stabilization, to talk of the development of a revolutionary situation, to talk of the transition to a new round of wars and revolutions, without at the same time mobilizing all our forces to develop the struggle for the most elementary demands of the working class, is but empty talk and phrase-mongering about the revolution, but not organizing the forces of the working class to achieve the revolutionary way out of the crisis. It means in reality a fatalistic waiting for the collapse of capitalism—an opportunist passivity no matter under how much left phraseology it is covered.

We will all readily agree with this and even proceed to criticize ourselves for the bad work of the red trade unions, and criticize the active comrades in the trade unions that they are not carrying through the decisions of the Comintern made repeatedly on the necessity to improve the leadership of the economic struggles. Such criticism is without doubt necessary. But what we have in such a criticism usually is the complete separation of the Party organizations from any guilt in the matter. They claim that they are occupied with "Party work." They have not the time to do "trade union" work. Such a criticism at once discloses the social democratic division between Party work and trade union work that still exists in our ranks. This wrong theory divides the tasks—giving to the trade unions the task of mobilizing the masses for the economic struggles while the Party as such is engaged in some other form of Party work. Comrade Piatnitsky in the May 15th issue of the *Communist International* has very sharply analyzed and condemned this social democratic heritage in our ranks. In dealing with this question Comrade Piatnitsky observed that often these "Social Democratic traditions are still preserved, which are frequently interwoven with sectarianism." The Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. has taken up this question as to the role of the Communist Party in the leading of the economic struggle and has embodied it in the *economic resolution*. It reads:

> "The Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. reminds all sections of the Comintern that the Communist Parties, which represent the interests of the working class as a whole, are responsible for the organization of the economic struggle of the proletariat against the capitalist offensive, and makes it obligatory for the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union organizations to bring about a rapid change for the better in the organization of the economic struggle of the proletariat, transferring the center of all Party and trade union work to the factories, in the work inside the reformist trade unions and in the strengthening of the red trade union oppositions and the red trade unions. It is only by bringing about the most rapid change in the organization of resistance to the attacks of capital on the standards of life of the workers and the unemployed, it

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is only by raising the mass work of the Communist parties to the level of the revolutionary political and organizational tasks put before the working class by the development of the crisis and the revolutionary upsurge at the end of capitalist stabilization, that the Communist Parties will be able to develop mass strikes and the unemployed movement and convert them into one of the main levers for the winning over the majority of the working class. directly leading the masses to decisive battles for the dictatorship of the proletariat."

In the past the resolutions of the E.C.C.I. and the R.I.L.U. on economic struggles were hardly ever discussed in the lower Party organizations. Now a change must be made. The discussion on this resolution must be made the beginning of a turn in the whole conception of the Party as to its role in the development of the economic struggle. It must be made the occasion for enrolling the Party membership, the majority of whom are still outside the unions, into the unions. It must be the occasion for examining the whole question of the organization of the fractions and their methods of work. In this connection the Party must still take up and discuss the special resolution on the *work of the fractions* adopted by the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. This resolution was printed in the August, 1932, issue of *The Communist*. The resolution on fractions emphasized especially that the Party committees must allow great initiative to the fractions in developing and leading the work in their organization, under the guidance of the Party committees. Similarly, the fractions must avoid all domineering and commanding tendencies in the mass organizations. The Twelfth Plenum *economic struggle* resolution, in dealing with the question of fractions, shows how important it is for us to study the methods of organizing the fractions and adopting the correct working methods. It states in these terms the necessity for fractions, "without which it is impossible to establish a correct political line or control its application, to give correct instructions (without overshadowing or domineering) or in general to strengthen the role of the Party and the revolutionary trade union organizations as the directing and leading force in the strike struggle, the unemployed movement and the general class struggle of the proletariat."

II.

One of the central questions which the resolution answers is the reason for the failure of the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade unions to develop on a wider scale the economic struggles. The resolution recognizes "the *growth of the revolutionary upsurge* in the sphere of the economic struggle of the proletariat" as it was in the last year expressed in the strike struggles, of a number of important countries, including the United States.

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But nevertheless the fact remains that, as the E.C.C.I. points out, "The Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union movement, however, have not since the Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. succeeded in rousing the majority of the working class to the struggle against the unceasing attacks of capital." This was especially true in the United States, where the capitalists succeeded in putting over big wage slashes in the last year on practically all sections of the working class, the steel workers, the auto workers, the organized as well as unorganized miners (Illinois and Pennsylvania, etc.), upon the organized railroad workers and printers, upon the organized and unorganized textile workers, upon the building trades workers, and the govenment employees. All sections of the workers were attacked by the capitalists. But we only in a very small measure succeeded in rousing the masses to struggle against these attacks. In many cases we were outside the struggles that did take place, while in others our participation was very weak. Why is this so? We have already successfully refuted the theories borrowed from the camp of the reformists that the workers will not fight during the crisis, that the struggle cannot be successful during the crisis. We have in a general way already begun to realize the reasons for this, through an examination of our work. But we did not as yet give a thorough and collective answer to this question aside from the correct observation that there still prevailed in our movement an underestimation of the readiness of the masses to fight which often left us lagging behind (East Ohio miners' strike), or a tendency to shrink from taking up the struggle on the ground that we are not sufficiently prepared. These right opportunist theories and moods we have recognized, though not always fundamentally and sharply enough combatted. No doubt they are the cause of much of the trouble. But very often even these opportunist theories were due to our isolation from the masses, our lack of contact with the workers in the factories, the reformist trade unions, the masses of the unemployed, etc., due to a sectarian approach to the masses, due to a fear to boldly take up the application of the united front from below. All of which sort of left us confused and helpless before the developing mass movement, or made it impossible for us to observe the real willingness of the masses to answer the attack of the capitalists, because the masses did not entrust their fate into our hands when they saw the methods we applied. Thus, for example, in September, 1931, we issued circulars, wrote screaming headlines in our press about the steel workers responding with a strike to the first national wage cut. But the workers though they were willing to answer with strike, felt helpless in the shops, not being united among themselves, not being united with the unemployed, who are the

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overwhelming majority in the steel industry. In the East Ohio miners' strike, in addition to an underestimation of the readiness of the miners to fight, we also had the underestimation of the role of the reformist union. Our comrades swore by all the gods that the workers would never fight under the flag of the U.M.W.A. and that the U.M.W.A. would not call any strikes. The facts proved quite different. The analysis made by the E.C.C.I. in its resolution as to the causes for the failure to develop the resistance of the masses to the capitalist attack, puts the finger on the very causes which we observe, are the reasons for the failure of the Party and the T.U.U.L. to develop the mass struggle against the bosses' attacks. The E.C.C.I. states:

> "The chief cause of the insufficient development of the economic struggles is the still unsatisfactory application of the line of independent leadership of economic struggles, on the basis of the tactics of the united front from below, in the underestimation of partial struggles, in the weak contacts with the masses in the factories and among the unemployed, in the weakening of the revolutionary positions inside the reformist unions, in the inability to expose the maneuvers of the reformist trade union bureaucrats, in the capitulation to reformist trade union bureaucrats openly or concealed by "left" phrases.

This analysis of the E.C.C.I. will and does answer to the general question as to the reasons for our inability to develop broader mass struggles against the attacks of the capitalists, and they will also give the reasons for the bad weaknesses in our leadership in many specific struggles that we led or participated in. They will at the same time be borne out in those cases where we did successfully lead and develop the struggle of the masses. If we ask, for example, why we could not develop the struggle of the railroad workers against the 10 per cent deduction from their wages last January, and the extension of this cut for almost another year, with the prospect that further cuts will be demanded by the employers, what answer can we give? It is true that to a certain extent for a long time, we looked upon these workers as aristocrats of labor about whom we shall bother as little as possible. But this is only a partial explanation, and is not true of the recent period of more than a year. The main reason is to be found in our weak position within the railroad unions, in our inability to develop the united front policy, in the underestimation of the partial struggle in this national industry, in the lack of contact on the job, and in a large measure in our inability to expose the maneuvers of the bureaucrats in carrying through the wage cuts. The same thing is true regarding the printers' wage cut, although here we have been at least more successful in developing the work of the opposition, though not yet able to completely defeat

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the maneuvers of the leaders. We are now reaping the fruits of our isolation from these organized workers, from our neglect for a long time to work within these reformist unions.

A few remarks on the Illinois miners' strike:

The Illinois struggle could have been foreseen many months before it actually broke out. The old agreement was to expire on April 1, 1932, and the operators served notice of a demand for a substantial wage cut. The miners convention was held shortly before April 1. At this convention the Walker-Lewis machine, sensing the fighting spirit of the workers, maneuvered in order to maintain its leadership over the miners. They "agreed" to the convention decision that, as against the demands of the operators the miners put forward the demand for a six-hour day instead of eight hours and a 20 per cent increase in wages in addition. These bureaucrats, of course, all the time were maneuvering in consultation with the operators to put over the wage cut on the miners. Our opposition in the U.M.W.A. was unable to expose the role of Lewis-Walker. The miners still placed their hope in their leadership. Why were we unable to expose them? In the first place we had very little organization. Our comrades failed to rouse the miners where we had contacts to develop partial struggles independent of the bureaucrats. Our opposition remained a parliamentary opposition. Secondly, our opposition on the one hand limited its exposure of the reformist and "left" reformist leaders to a mere denunciation and name-calling, while at the same time many serious opportunist mistakes were made over a period of time in a conciliatory policy towards some of the "left" reformist leaders (first Edmunson, later Ansbury).

Immediately before April 1 (at the time of the N.M.U. convention) a correct policy was adopted. It called for the development of an independent struggle of the miners on the basis of the united front from below on the two major issues—against any cuts or worsening of working conditions, and relief to the unemployed miners. Lewis and Walker began their betrayal. For months part of the miners were locked out, while others were allowed to work. This was part of a scheme to divide, demoralize, starve and defeat the miners. During this period we had the greatest opportunity to develop the independent struggle. But we also failed to lead the miners in struggle against the operators. The failure on our part to develop the independent struggle on the basis of a genuine policy of united front from below made it possible at the critical moment when Lewis with all his treachery and state power could not drive the miners back to work, for the "left" reformist leaders to take

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hold of the surging mass movement, defeat it, and finally put over the cut which Lewis could not accomplish.

In the later stages of the struggle with the organization of the Progressive Miners Union there again developed on the one hand a sectarian approach to this new union, which, though headed by "left" reformists, began to embrace large masses of miners. Immediately after this was corrected, a right opportunist differentiation of the leadership as conscious and unconscious betrayers, instead of a correct designation, reformists and "left" reformists, bearing in mind that the "left" reformists are the most dangerous and we must use special methods of exposing them. This latter error made it easier for the leaders of the Progressive Miners Union to put over the wage cut.

Here we see once again how the analysis of the E.C.C.I. applies. In fact there is not a single point mentioned in the E.C.C.I. resolution dealing with the causes for our failure to develop the struggles of the masses, that did not actually take place here either prior to the development of the strike or in the course of it. To begin with, an underestimation of the possibility of independent leadership of the struggle; a failure to establish sufficient contact before the struggle in the mines and within the locals of the U.M.W.A.; a sectarian approach to the united front and at the same time tendencies towards united front with the "left" reformist leaders; a failure to develop mine strikes and other forms of the partial struggle; and, finally, inability to expose the maneuvers of the bureaucrats. To this must be added the fact that the Central Committee of the Party, the N.M.U., the T.U.U.L. and the Chicago District organization of the Party failed in time to give attention to the struggle which now stands out as the most important sruggle in the United States for the past year. And even after the strike began this attitude was not radically changed.

The last point is of such great importance that it is worth while to develop it a little. The Chicago District has as its main industries of concentration mining, steel, packing houses, and railroads. The Cleveland District has as its main industry of concentration steel. The Boston District has as its main industries of concentration, textile and shoes. But the forces, finances, energy, political guidance to work within these industries is by no means commensurate with the needs for work in these industries. In fact, it occupies, outside of occasional resolutions, very little place in the consideration of the Party in these districts in comparison with other tasks undertaken. When this question is raised, the answer is almost everywhere the same. It is that our comrades are busy with work among the unemployed, with the election campaign, the recruiting campaign,

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the Scottsboro campaign, the *Daily Worker* drive, the Hunger March, etc. What the Party as a whole has not yet learned is that all of these tasks can be carried through by going to the masses in these industries of concentration. And at the same time this will result in establishing infinite and permanent contacts with the masses in these basic industries, will enable us to prepare these masses for struggle, prepare the struggles, and thus assure their success in the broad political sense and make more possible the gain of the material demands, which in turn will make it more possible to gain the confidence of the masses for the Party and the revolutionary unions. This once again raises sharply before the Party the carrying through of the program of concentration decided upon more than two years ago. Only little effort was made thus far in this direction. And only the carrying through of this policy simultaneously with the improvement in the methods of work can make it possible for us to establish our position in the factories, the reformist unions, to build the revolutionary unions and thus overcome the lagging behind.

If we examine the strike struggles that took place in the past year, what do we find? The number of workers on strike has increased, though not sufficiently. The reasons for this small growth are already obvious. The number of spontaneous strikes were almost altogether limited to new strata of workers, who entered the struggle for the first time (High Point, Binghamton, shoe workers; Lewistown, Maine, shoe workers; South River needle workers). The number of workers organized in reformist unions who were involved in the strikes has grown proportionally very much, to the point where the majority of the strikes were by members of the reformist unions (Southern Illinois and New York building trades, New York needle workers, etc.), or fought under reformist leadership (East Ohio). The strike led by the unions affiliated to or close to the T.U.U.L. were, with the exception of the Kentucky miners' strike, the Warren steel strike, the Colorado beet workers' strike and a few struggles on ships, limited to strikes in light industry (fur workers, shoe workers, alteration painters, doll workers, etc.). It is worthy to mention that a number of strikes and practically all the strikes in the light industries led by the T.U.U.L. unions ended in winning of the economic demands or in a partial victory. Finally, as in the last few years the overwhelming majority of the strikes in the year 1932 were in the mining, needle, textile and building trades, with the agricultural workers, shoe workers and marine workers coming next in line. There were no mass strikes in the steel, auto, chemical, railroad and other basic and trustified industries.

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It is impossible here to go into a lengthy discussion of all the lessons that can be drawn from the above analysis. Just a few observations. The spontaneous strikes were almost all limited to new strata of workers. They were all very short strikes, and all but one (High Point) did not gain their immediate objective. The two industries that in the previous year furnished most of the spontaneous strikes, mining and textile (which were defeated), saw very few spontaneous struggles. The workers in the steel and auto industry, though attacked very severely, did not respond with spontaneous strikes. We see, therefore, that the smaller number of spontaneous strikes was not due to improvement in our strike preparations and leadership, but due to increasing difficulties which the workers sensed (those who had some experience), they can and must be overcome through some organization and preparatory work. Among the problems the workers faced were the problems as to what action will the unemployed take. This we did not answer, because we failed to organize the joint action of the employed and unemployed. A second important and new problem was the mass deportation of foreign-born, which again we failed to answer, first by our failure to develop a mass struggle against deportations, and secondly by our failure to systematically put forward native workers as the leaders of the developing movements.

What we have said above regarding the cause for the failure to develop the struggle must be taken together with the conclusion stated here. The present situation demands more attention and more thorough preparation of strikes, along the lines indicated in the E.C.C.I. resolution. This in no wise implies that we must try to build "perfect" organization before we can lead the masses in struggle. Often the organization and even the preparations will have to be carried through in the course of the struggle. But none the less our whole course must be to establish contacts with the masses and prepare them for the struggle. Nor does it mean that there will not be many mass spontaneous strikes. In fact the present situation, our still weak contacts, etc., indicate that if we succeed in developing and successfully leading a number of strikes in important industries, there will develop simultaneously, spontaneous strikes which we will have to be prepared to give adequate leadership.

III.

What is the significance of the growth of strikes of workers organized in reformist unions and the ability of the bureaucrats to place themselves at the head of these struggles and disrupt them? In the last year, parallel with the deepening of the crisis, the bosses

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have made sharp attacks on the living standards of the organized workers who hitherto occupied a more privileged position. This, together with the mass unemployment in these industries, is moving the masses to struggle. Simultaneously the revolt against the A. F. of L. leadership is growing. The A. F. of L. leaders, under the pressure of the masses, are not as the Socialists and renegades claim becoming militant, but they are making left maneuvers in order to maintain their hold on the masses, and help the capitalists to put through their attacks. The recent A. F. of L. convention represents such a maneuver on a grand scale. Most, in fact almost all of the strikes the bureaucrats succeeded in smashing. Why? Because of our weak position numerically within the reformist unions and because of our very bad work. The E.C.C.I. resolution states:

> "One of the chief causes of the insufficient mobilization of the masses by the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union organizations in the struggle against the capitalist offensive is the impermissibly weak revolutionary work carried on *inside the reformist trade unions.*
>
> . . . . "The consistent, everyday struggle of the Communists and supporters of the revolutionary trade union movement for the establishment of the united front of the workers urgently raises before all sections of the Comintern and the R.I.L.U. the question of work *inside* the reformist trade unions and the *methods* of this work. The influence of the trade union bureaucracy, especially in countries with a long-established and strong reformist trade union, is one of the chief hindrances to the development of the class struggle, and cannot be broken down by shouts about wrecking the trade unions for which Communists are not striving, nor by deserting the trade unions, but by persistent work inside the reformist trade unions, by fighting hard to win every member of the reformist trade unions, for *every elected post* in the trade unions, for securing the dismissal of the trade union bureaucracy and winning over the local organizations of the individual trade unions and the local trade union councils of the reformist trade unions."

There can be no question about our neglect for a long time to undertake serious work in the reformist unions, our negative position to questions when we did maintain some contact in the reformist unions, in many cases an actually wrong position, helped the bureaucrats to maintain their hold in these unions and made it difficult for us to play a more important role in developing and leading the struggle of the workers in the reformist unions. We are just emerging from this position. We have made headway recently in the reformist unions. We have through little work been able to oust the bureaucrats from many posts and elect Communists and workers who accept the opposition platform. We have been able to develop a mass movement of the rank and file on the issue of unemployment insurance, which was mainly responsible for the A. F. of L. leadership, at least in words, being forced to abandon its traditional opposition to

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unemployment insurance. We carried through for the first time in more than eight years a national conference of A. F. of L. locals on the issue of unemployment insurance, relief and other questions. Our oppositions have gained position or made gains in unions where hitherto we had few supporters (bricklayers, printers, etc.) There still remains much unclarity, regarding our methods of work in the reformist unions. This is especially true about the fractions and the lower Party organizations. We even still observe old tendencies and even new ones about deserting the reformist unions since they are losing membership any how. There is much unclarity, especially in some industries, as to the relationship of the red unions and the work in the reformist unions. One of the most burning questions is the slowness with which the oppositions are organizing their forces on the basis of the shop, and the development and leading of independent struggles. These questions must be solved concretely for each industry on the basis of the E.C.C.I. resolution, which lays down the main line, and upon an examination of the concrete situation in each industry, locality and union. But even here, let us draw some conclusions from the resolution, especially on a few questions that we have observed need clarification.

. . The membership of the A. F. of L. is declining. What conclusions do we draw from this? Do we draw the conclusion that all we have to do is to fold our hands and watch them go down and wait until they disappear? There are such tendencies. Our answer is, in the first place it is no victory for us if millions drop out and do not come to us. If the one and a half million dropped out and came to our unions that is a real victory, but if they merely dropped out and disappear, this is no victory for us; it makes it easier for the bosses to put over larger wage cuts on the working class. We cannot wait and see them merely decline; we must bear in mind that precisely now our task is to fight inside the A. F. of L. and our task is to prevent the workers from dropping out one by one for non-payment of dues, through expulsions, etc., and we must raise the question of exempt stamps, of keeping the workers inside the unions as a burning question inside the A. F. of L. In other words, our conclusion is not less work but more work in the A. F. of L. But it must be revolutionary work.

The second question: How can we expose the A. F. of L. leadership and its program? They came forward with the 30-hour week and for state unemployment insurance. What do we do? We cannot merely come and say, you people are a bunch of fakers, you have proven it in the past, and therefore we will have nothing to say except that you are fakers and we call upon the working class to repudiate you and join us. Workers who are in the A. F.

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of L. are not there only because of certain compulsions; they are there also because they still believe to a certain extent in these reformist policies, because they are still not completely freed from the illusions that these bureaucrats will do something for them. We must therefore map out our program of work in such a way that through practical proposals which we will make we will prove to the working class on the one hand that the bureaucrats are fighting against them, secondly, we will actually mobilize the working class for struggle, independently and over the heads of the bureaucrats. We see, for example on insurance, federal unemployment insurance—we fight against their bill, we fight for our bill, but where we are defeated we will then make proposals how to put their bill through, and to prove that they have no intention of putting even this miserable measure into effect.

On the thirty-hour week, we have correctly until now answered the demand of Green and Muste for the six-hour day, that they are for the stagger plan and are laying the basis for it. We have fought for the 40-hour week. We alone fight for the shorter workday without reduction in pay. We will have to be practical. For example, in a certain union when they talk about the 30-hour week without reduction in pay, and workers are working 50 hours or 48 hours, we will make a demand for the 40-hour week without reduction in pay and prove that they are against even 40 hours. We will not come out and make a demand for 30 hours, which, it may be argued will mean an increase in wages amounting to two-thirds. But there are many cases where, in order to expose the bureaucrats, we will go on record for the 30-hour week to prove that they are not for it. We will not be afraid to make proposals on how to fight to prove that they wont carry it out.

Comrades, we all know that for a long time our trade union movement had to conduct a fight against the right wing elements who came forward with the theory, force the leaders to fight. That if you can force Green to fight, Green will fight. And who also came forward with the theory that all you have to do is take over the union apparatus and everything will be all right. They came out against the building of revolutionary unions. This fight today is as bitter as ever and it must be continued against all these right wing elements whether inside our ranks or outside our ranks and in this connection we must increase our exposure of the renegades who for example in the mining fields, on the one hand, the Lovestonites came out in Illinois and supported Lewis by telling the miners not to organize into the Progressive Miners, to be for unity inside with Lewis.

These people we must attack, this right wing policy we will fight

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harder than before. At the same time, we must admit that we have made some mistakes, we have made certain very bad interpretations of the correct line of the Comintern and R.I.L.U. and in practice bad mistakes in trying to avoid the mistakes of the right wing, in trying to avoid creating the illusion that you can just take over the apparatus of the unions. We have made mistakes which in practice amounted really to telling the workers you can do nothing, don't fight for office, don't expose the bureaucrats because you may make them fight. In this connection we quote from R.I.L.U. magazine, Number 18—the speech of Piatnitsky:

> "In admitting the impossibility to win over the reformist trade union apparatus, many of the comrades have generally given up all struggle for trade union elective posts, and in practice have done nothing to win such posts in the reformist unions. *And how is it possible to carry on work in the trade unions if there is no stimulus that this organization will in the end be won over, that some of the trade union bureaucrats will be driven out and will be replaced by our comrades? This is exactly what happened.*
>
> "About the second question I also spoke of at one time. The Brandlerites said: Force the reformist trade union bureaucrats to fight, force them to work (zwingt die bonzen—force the leaders). Naturally, they cannot be forced to fight, for they are only reformists. And we said: You propose to the trade union bureaucrats to fight. And we wrote and used up a great deal of paper, we laughed at Brandler. But we failed to see that the result we got was not what we had desired. What was the result?
>
> "*The result was that the Communists and revolutionary workers did not dare to come to trade union meetings and declare there that the trade unions do not defend the interests of the working class, that the trade unions do not struggle, for such criticism would in their opinion mean that the trade unions could enter upon the road of struggle, i.e., in other words, such criticism would be a continuation of the tactics of 'force the leaders', in view of the fact that we ourselves said that it was impossible to win over the apparatus of the trade unions, and therefore it means that no struggle must be waged for elective positions. Thus, we proved to drag along in the tail-end, we did not do anything, limiting ourselves in the best event to exclusive criticism in the press, which actually did not tell the workers anything.*
>
> "This incorrect theory and this incorrect struggle against 'force the leaders' will have to be warded off, in order to make it possible for our comrades to win over the masses in the trade union organizations. If we, Communists and revolutionary workers, do not criticize the leadership of the reformist trade unions for not waging any struggle, and do not criticize it at trade union meetings, in the Press, and everywhere for betraying the interests of the working class, and do not propose that a struggle is waged, then we cannot expect to get results. There are still many such theories. An end must be put to them. And in this connection some talk can already be heard and questions asked as to what danger is greater, the right

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> or the left. It has already been found that the chief danger is the right danger, and here no changes must be made. The Congress has found it to be so; the Plenums have found it to be so. But does the fact that the chief danger is the right danger exclude the necessity to struggle against the 'left' danger? Is it for this reason that we don't have to work in the reformist unions? Such an opinion is sectarian. Leftist theories prevail as far as the question of work in the reformist unions is concerned. In our work in the reformist unions, as experiences show, many right-opportunist mistakes are made, but it is even worse if we do not work there at all."

In this connection just one main point about the question of new unions and old unions. Our main line in the United States is to build revolutionary unions because the great masses are unorganized, especially in the basic industries, but we do not make a line of division between work in the reformist unions and work of building new unions. To us it is one task of mobilizing the workers against wage cuts, unemployment, by exposing the bureaucrats and raising these struggles always to a higher level, thus revolutionizing the masses. In those industries like mining, textile, marine, needle trades, where we have already revolutionary unions our main task is to build these revolutionary unions and our task is to work within the reformist unions as oppositions, to make united fronts with these oppositions with our unions for joint struggle in the shops, for the unemployed, etc. We must be the ones in these unions, in these industries, *through our revolutionary unions, to raise the slogan of one union in the industry and to prove to the workers that we are really sincere for one union in the industry based on the class struggle and that it is the bureaucrats that divide the workers and not we, that through their expulsions and failure to organize the unorganized, through their treacherous policy have made necessary the building of revolutionary unions.* We stand for a policy of uniting all the workers and forming one union in the industry based on the class struggle. In other words, we fight for the preservation of the unions to extend their base and try to develop them into real instruments of class struggle and at the same time to fight for all the workers in that industry, in one union and the bureaucrats are the ones that are splitting and dividing the workers. In those industries like building, printing and railroad where we have not yet any revolutionary unions, our main work still consists in building oppositions inside the reformist unions. There what is our policy? There do we say we are against forming new unions under any conditions? Of course not. We have done it in the case of the alteration painters. We will do it every time we have the necessity. But nevertheless in these industries basically our work still consists at the present time in working as an opposition in the reformist unions

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and only where the necessity arises to form revolutionary unions. At the same time our task is to develop oppositions under our leadership against the bureaucrats and over the heads of the bureaucrats develop the struggle and if the logic of the struggle leads to new unions, we will not shrink from forming new unions in these industries either. In the United States our main line is new unions based on the fact that the masses are unorganized and that the unions are controlled by the bureaucrats and more and more it becomes impossible to advance the interest of the workers without forming new unions, but where the reformist unions have a mass character our first step is to work through these unions and build our oppositions, and only then do we form revolutionary unions side by side in the course of the struggle, when the necessity arises and we have mobilized masses for it. We do not know when the situation in the carpenters or painters perhaps in a certain city or state or nationally, the question of the new union will be raised as the central question. When it arises we will meet it as we have always done.

Don't neglect to read the COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL magazine Nos. 17-18 and 19 (Vol.IX) which contain invaluable material on the Twelfth Plenum. Price 10c. per copy. Subscription $2.00 per year.

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The End of Capitalist Stabilization and the Basic Tasks of the British and American Sections of the C. I.

By T. GUSEV *

I.—THE GROWTH OF THE REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE, FASCISM AND SOCIAL-FASCISM.

THE clearest indication of the end of the stabilization of capitalism is the development of the world revolutionary upsurge, which arose on the basis of the world economic crisis and includes the revolutions in China and Spain, the approaching revolutionary crisis in Germany, Poland and Japan, the tremendous strikes in Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia, Great Britain, U. S. A., the maturing of the revolutionary crisis in India and a series of revolts in South America (Chili, Peru, Brazil).

Ever increasing masses are coming forward to the front of revolution. The forces of the world revolution are growing. But at the same time, the forces of counter-revolution are rallying together. "The party of revolution rallies the party of counter-revolution" (Marx). The development of the revolutionary upsurge, and the growth of revolutionary crises cannot take place in any other way. There is not and could not be a revolution which did not have the counter-revolution against it. It is therefore, not correct to think that the development of fascism signifies a weakening in the development of the forces of revolution. This can only be the case after the defeat of the revolution, after the ebb of revolution, in the period of reaction (e.g., the growth of fascism in Italy in 1922-23). But such a view is absolutely incorrect under conditions of the development of a revolutionary upsurge. The development of a revolutionary upsurge signifies not the weakening, but the growth of the forces of revolution. The forces of revolution are increasing and beginning their offensive, and as a result, the forces of counter-revolution are rallying and passing to the counter-offen-

* We are printing Comrade Gusev's speech at the Twelfth Plenum in an abbreviated form.

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sive against the forces of revolution. The struggle is blazing up and rising to its highest level—to revolution.

Thus, in the epoch of the Socialist transformation of society, bourgeois-imperialist counter-revolution is not some chance objective hindrance for revolution, but an historical inevitability. There cannot be revolution, without counter-revolution.

The historical inevitability of counter-revolution has to be stressed, particularly owing to the fact, that a view has appeared in some of the sections of the C. I. as though the development of Fascism is an unforeseen, and at the same time, very dangerous, "super difficulty" for the revolution, that the development of Fascism practically means the end of revolution. Fascism itself, according to this view, arose as the result of the incorrect course of the C. I. and its sections. Such a view of Fascism cannot be called anything but capitulatory. As, in the opinion of those who hold this view of Fascism, revolution can only be victorious when there is no counter-revolution, the appearance of Fascism is declared to decide the inevitable doom of revolution in advance. Therefore they propose to retreat, to capitulate to Fascism. Such capitulatory views were contained in the recent speech of Comrade Humbert Droz, in the Swiss Communist Party, which objectively gave the International Rights a political platform.

Comrade Humbert Droz has renounced these views, but this cannot destroy the fact that such views appear from time to time, not only in Switzerland. The source of these views is the failure to understand that it is precisely the growth of the forces of revolution that inevitably evokes the solidification of the forces of Fascism.

The same failure to understand the relation between the growth of revolutionary forces, and the development of Fascism, in the period of the development and the growth of the revolutionary upsurge, lies at the basis of the fatalistic theories which arose a year ago in the German Communist Party, which were very properly criticized at the time by Comrade Thaelmann. What is the essence of these fatalistic theories, which seem, externally, to be similar to the thesis of Marx of the inevitability of the rallying of the forces of counter-revolution, in the course of the development of revolution; but in reality are a gross distortion of this thesis? The essence of these fatalistic theories is that the working class must first pass through the Fascist reaction to understand the necessity for revolution, that only a Fascist dictatorship can bring the masses right up to the necessity of commencing a revolutionary struggle; in short, that without counter-revolution, revolution is impossible, that the counter-revolution rallies the party of revolution. This is the direct

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opposite of what Marx says. It is not revolution which evokes counter-revolution as Marx and Lenin taught, but, they hold the contrary, counter-revolution produces revolution. Thus the starting point of the revolutionary upsurge is not the growth of the forces of revolution, as Marx and Lenin taught, but the growth of the forces of counter-revolution.

A correct Marxist-Leninist postulation of the question of the relationship between the growth of the forces of revolution, and those of Fascism, is of decisive importance to the whole strategy of the C. I. and its sections. The views of Humbert Droz lead to a retreating capitulatory strategy, and the views of the German "fatalists"; to a passive waiting strategy, i.e., in practice to the same capitulation to Fascism as with Humbert Droz. However, the revolutionary upsurge cannot mean anything else but the beginning of the strategic advance of the revolutionary forces, in which there may be defensive and offensive tactical fights.

The question of the relations between Fascism and Social-Fascism is of equal importance for Bolshevik strategy to the question of the relations between the growth of revolutionary forces and the development of Fascism. This question is worked out in detail in the theses. But in some sections, nevertheless, a misunderstanding of the basic role of Social-Democracy as the chief social bulwark of the bourgeoisie continues to exist, and there is a misunderstanding of Bolshevik strategy in connection with this.

The Bolshevik strategy of the C. I. has always been to deal the main blows against the conciliatory parties (against the Social-Democrats and the national reformists). It is sufficient to glance at the history of the Russian revolution to see this.

Here is what Stalin said when reviewing the three phases of the Russian revolution:

First phase, from 1903 to the February revolution in 1917.

Aim: The overthrow of Czarism, and the abolition of the last feudal survivals.

The essential force of the revolution: the proletariat.

The immediate reserve: the peasants.

Direction of immediate attack: to isolate the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie who were obliged to win over the peasants and ward off the revolution by an agreement with Czarism.

Disposition of forces: alliance of workers with peasants. . . .

Second phase, March, 1917—October, 1917.

Aim: To overthrow imperialism in Russia and withdraw from the imperialist war.

Essential force of the revolution: the proletariat.

Immediate reserve: the poorer ranks of the peasants.

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Probable reserve: the proletariat of neighboring countries.

Favoring circumstances: the prolonged war and the imperialist crisis.

Direction of immediate attack: to isolate the petty-bourgeois democrats (i.e., the Mensheviks and the Socialist-revolutionaries) who were trying to win over the mass of rural workers and to avert revolution by an agreement with imperialism.

Disposition of forces: alliance of workers with the poorest peasants . . .

Third phase (begun after the October revolution).

Aim: To consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country and to use it as a fulcrum for the overthrowing of imperialism in all countries. The revolution is not to be limited to one sole country and has entered its worldwide stage.

Essential force: the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, and the revolutionary movements of the proletariat in other countries.

Principal reserves: the semi-proletarian masses and the peasants of advanced lands, the nationalist (liberationist) movements in the colonies and dependent states.

Direction of immediate attack: to isolate the petty bourgeoisie partisans of Second International, promoters of the policy of conciliation with imperialism.

Disposition of forces: alliance of proletarian revolution with nationalist movements in colonies and dependent states. (Stalin, *Leninism*, page 96.)

As we see, at all three stages, the main blow was directed against the conciliatory parties.

In 1905, the Bolsheviks were accused of getting too absorbed in the struggle against the liberal-monarchist conciliatory bourgeoisie, and paying less attention to the struggle against the enemy, against Czarism. In 1917, the Bolsheviks were accused of getting too absorbed in the struggle against the conciliatory petty-bourgeois parties, the Mensheviks and S. R.'s, paying less attention to the struggle against the enemy, against the bourgeoisie.

Such accusations only show a complete failure to understand the role of the conciliatory parties and the essence of Bolshevik strategy.

Why must the main blows be directed against the conciliatory parties in the period of the preparations for revolution, and its approaching development?

Because the conciliatory parties (the social-fascists and the national reformists) in the period of approaching revolutionary development, are the most dangerous social bulwark of the enemies of revolution. Therefore, it is impossible to overthrow the enemy with-

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out isolating these parties, without tearing the wide masses of the toilers away from them.

Both social-fascism and fascism represent bourgeois-imperialist counter-revolution, but social-fascism is a special detachment of bourgeois-imperialist counter-revolution, having its own special tasks. What are these special tasks? They are to strive by all means to reach a compromise, to conciliate the proletariat with its class enemy, with the bourgeoisie (particularly with fascism). They are to preach compromise, and also to carry on a bogus "struggle" against fascism, to restrain the workers from attacks on fascism, from resistance to the political and economic offensive of capital, or, in short, to restrain the workers from revolutionary activity, from revolution. Thus social-fascism plays the role of a shield, behind which counter-revolution can organize its forces. Therefore, to beat the enemy, the bourgeoisie, we must direct the main blow against its chief social bulwark against the chief enemy of Communism in the working class, against social-democracy, against social-fascism.

It may seem that in Germany, at the present time, for example, the chief social bulwark of the bourgeoisie is fascism, and that, therefore, we should deal the chief blows against fascism.

This is not correct. It is not correct, firstly, because fascism is not our chief enemy in the workers' movement, but social-fascism is our chief enemy there. What does this mean? It means that to win over the majority of the proletariat, i.e., to prepare the *basic* condition for the proletarian revolution, it is necessary to direct the chief blows against social-fascism.

It is not correct, secondly, because the blows directed by us against social-fascism differ from the blows delivered against fascism. Fascism is open counter-revolution utilizing social demagogy. Social-fascism is concealed counter-revolution. For example, take the attitude of German fascism and German social-fascism to intervention in the U.S.S.R. The fascists are for intervention, and openly say so, while the social-fascists are also for intervention, but talk openly, of defense of the U.S.S.R. (Resolution of the II International). This means that we have to strike at fascism, in a different manner from social-fascism.

It is in Germany at the present time that we can see most clearly the difference in the character of the blows which we deal against social-fascism and against fascism. We expose the social-fascists, but we never call for an armed struggle against them. We fight the fascists in the streets, carrying on explanatory work among the masses to the extent that the fascists still use social demagogy. In the period of preparations for revolution(and it is just such a pe-

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riod which we are now passing through in Germany, Poland and Japan), our chief weapon is exposure, or to use the expression of Marx, the "weapon of criticism". The armed struggle, or as Marx expressed it, the "criticism of weapons", is our secondary weapon in this period. We direct the chief weapon against the main social bulwark of the bourgeoisie.

The united front with the Social-Democratic workers in the struggle against the Fascist gangs, unites both forms of weapon—the chief and the secondary weapons. On the one hand, the united front is an armed struggle against Fascist gangs, and on the other hand, the united front is the best means of exposing the Social-Fascist leaders in practice.

From all this, it is clear, that in the period of preparations for revolution, we direct our chief weapon at this period against our chief enemy in the working class, i.e., against Social-Fascism.

The main blows against Social-Fascism, the isolation of Social-Fascism,—this means the winning over of the majority of the working class, and also the toiling masses of the petty bourgeoisie in town and village, converting the toiling masses of the petty bourgeoisie from a reserve of the bourgeoisie into a reserve of the proletariat. Without this, the victory of the revolution is impossible.

II.—THE WINNING OVER OF THE MAJORITY OF THE PROLETARIAT AS THE FUNDAMENTAL STRATEGIC TASK OF THE SECTIONS OF THE C. I.

The end of capitalist stabilization and the growth of the revolutionary upsurge sets the basic strategic task of winning over the majority of the working class before all sections of the C. I.

This task is made vastly easier because, as the result of three years of crisis, we find everywhere an upsurge of the mass movement, proceeding differently in different countries. The situation which has arisen at the present time may be characterized as follows: The wide masses of the workers (and, in some countries, the peasants as well) are prepared for the struggle. Some big sections of workers are entering the struggle, sometimes under the leadership of the Communist Party (Brux), sometimes (especially in economic fights) under the leadership of the reformists (Lancashire), and recently they have begun to act independently, against the wishes of the trade unions (Belgium). In the latter two cases, the leadership of the struggle began to come under the Communists' influence in those places where they attempted to intervene, which is a very significant thing.

The influence of the sections of the C.I. is growing everywhere, despite the fact that, in a number of sections, we cannot point to any

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considerable successes in the matter of improving their work in the period since the XI Plenum, either politically or organizationally, which might have explained the increase in their influence.

The masses want to fight. They are seeking leadership, and, however weak the work of the sections may be, they come to us.

Does not this example of the Lancashire strike and the example of the American Communist Party, which, last year, led the big miners' strikes in Pennsylvania and Ohio, show that the masses are ready for the fight, and are seeking the leadership of the Communist Parties and the Red Trade Unions; that Communists need only to exert even slight efforts and the leadership will fall into their hands?

The things which hindered the English and American sections most of all in obtaining the leadership of mass activity was their sectarian approach to the masses, their over-estimation of the influence of the Social-Fascists and trade union bureaucrats among the workers, and hence their efforts to remain only in the opposition. Then there is the completely insufficient initiative of the lower Party organizations and the Red Trade Unions, and also the R.T.U.O., and, finally, the weakness of our cadres.

The sectarian approach to the masses. The sources of the sectarian approach to the masses in Great Britain and the U.S.A. are different. In Great Britain, it is to be explained by the fact that the British Communist Party has supported the Labor Party at the elections for a number of years, and the necessary transition to the tactic of "class against class" was accompanied by a stubborn inner-Party struggle against the right deviation. Therefore, the tactic of the united front with the workers who belonged to the Labor Party was looked on, by a large portion of the Party members, as a step backward from the tactic of "class against class." On this basis, there arose a sectarian resistance in the C.P.G.B. to the adoption of the tactic of the united front with the workers who belonged to the Labor Party and the Independent Labor Party. The British comrades were afraid of the united front, and therefore, in spite of many favorable conditions, the British Communist Party has hardly any practical achievements in this matter. However, in countries like Great Britain and Germany, where there are big Social-Fascist parties and big reformist trade unions, there can be no question of winning over the majority of the workers unless the tactic of the united front is adopted, and unless work is carried on in the trade unions. Therefore, the sectarian tendencies in the British Communist Party lead in reality to a right opportunist lagging behind the mass movement, and this is the chief danger.

The situation in England at the present time is such that the British Communist Party could win thousands of workers from the

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Labor Party and the I.L.P. into its ranks, and those of the Minority Movement. The majority of the members of such organizations as the Poplar Branch of the I.L.P. in London, and a number of others, might join our Party. But the Party does not see this task, and does not set itself this task, because it does not know how to distinguish the maneuvers of the leaders, from the genuine strivings of the workers. Therefore, it happens that the Party repulses the workers of the Labor Party and the Independent Labor Party who are turning in its direction.

Here is a very characteristic example of how this is done.

As we know, the I.L.P. recently split away from the Labor Party and published its "new program." Among these "rules" there are some very "left" things—"the winning of power by the united working class," "abandonment of the method of gradual reform," "a swift passage from capitalism to Socialism," "the socialization of the vital resources of the country, including the banks and finances, the land and agriculture, the chief branches of industry and transport," etc.

This is all inside the country. On an international scale, there is the following program:

"Steadfast opposition by individual and collective resistance to all war preparations and tendencies. If war is declared . . . the I.L.P. will demand . . . an immediate general strike. It reaffirms its demand for disarmament by example, irrespective of what other governments may do."

How did our Communist Party react to the disaffiliation of the I.L.P. from the Labor Party, and its rules and program, which I have just quoted?

Firstly, the disaffiliation of the I.L.P. from the Labor Party was declared to be a "swindle." There is no doubt that there was a very considerable proportion of swindling in the disaffiliation of the I.L.P. But to describe it entirely as swindling means to fail to see the mass of members of the I.L.P. behind the swindling faces of the leaders, or that these members really want to renew, or, as the members of the I.L.P. themselves say, to "rejuvenate" the I.L.P. and turn it into a revolutionary party. This genuine leftward turn of the workers in the I.L.P. (and in the Labor Party) is missed by our Party. The Party does not understand that when workers leave the Labor Party, this is a difficult turning point in their political development.

I will pass on to the U.S.A. The sources of the sectarian approach to the masses in the Communist Party of the U. S. A. are not the same as in England. Sectarianism is explained here by the fact

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that, up to the present, the majority of the members, and especially the leading cadres of the Party, have not been native-born American workers, and a considerable proportion of the cadres come from small industry, while a considerable number of them are of petty-bourgeois origin. The real nature of this sectarianism consists in a right opportunist lagging behind the mass movement.

In distinction to the British Communist Party, the Communist Party of the U.S.A. has several big strikes to its credit, which it led independently.

This experience shows that our Parties and red trade unions have wide possibilities of leading independent economic fights. But this possibility is utilized without any definite and consistently applied plan, in a partisan manner, from time to time, and case to case. Therefore, it is not surprising that the strikes which are successfully led by us do not leave any trace on our Parties and our trade unions. Remember the famous strike of the textile workers in Gastonia, which obtained the sympathy of the workers of the South for us, and which gave us the possibility of building up our Party organization there. And what have we now in Gastonia? Not a single Party member. Take last year's strike in Pennsylvania and Ohio. After the strike, our union did not grow stronger there, but weakened.

The C.P.U.S.A. has recently led several big strikes and big revolutionary unemployed actions, but it is quite obvious that strong sectarian tendencies, especially on the question of the attitude to partial demands, lie at the basis of this lack of plan and partisan attitude in the sphere of the leadership of economic fights by the C.P.U.S.A.

Sectarian tendencies in the C.P.U.S.A. are the chief hindrance to carrying out the tactic of the united front.

Here is one example, of many, showing how this tactic is operated.

There was a strike of 25,000 textile workers in Lawrence. At the meetings of the strikers, which were held by the United Textile Workers Union (affiliated to the A. F. of L.), there were usually 3,000 to 8,000 persons. We held meetings on the outskirts, and 300 to 500 people came to us. Thus we were isolated from the basic masses of strikers. When the reformists called a meeting for the last time, and thousands of workers came to it, there was no one to speak at this meeting, because the reformists had already decided to end the strike, and they left the meeting unattended to. But our comrades did not know about this meeting, as they took very little interest in any of the meetings called by the reformists. The strike was broken.

One American comrade describes the attitude of the Party to

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the strike as follows: They look on the struggle led by the revolutionary trade unions as the struggle of "our workers," and on the strikes led by the A. F. of L. as the struggle of "workers who are not ours."

Here is another American witness, Comrade Bedacht, who stated at the July session of the Polit Bureau: "Our comrades divide the working class into two categories—our friends and our enemies."

"Our workers," and "not our workers"—that is the united front, American style! However, this sectarian position not only fails to hinder, but is the basis for deeply opportunist "gentlemen's agreements" with the reformists, for the "division of spheres of influence," as was the case in Illinois.

Work among the unemployed, on the admission of the American comrades themselves, "is still carried out on a narrow basis and has a sectarian character". Therefore, it is not surprising that it is weakening and narrowing. In the first quarter of 1932, there were 30,000 registered in the unemployed organizations, and in the second quarter, there were 13,000.

One of the biggest mass political actions, in which the Party played a prominent role, was the movement of the veterans. (See "Communist International," No. 16, 1932.) I must stop to analyze the line of the Party in this movement, in view of the fact that such mass movements, which extend to the petty-bourgeoisie, as well as to the workers, are becoming more widespread in the U.S.A., and the question of the winning over of these masses by our Party becomes exceptionally important.

In the leadership of the Party, with regard to the veterans' movement, there were a number of vacillations, the chief source of which was the doctrinaire sectarian approach to the masses. At first the Polburo made a decision: "Convert the march of the veterans into the sending of a mass delegation elected by ex-soldiers in Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and New York."

As further events showed, this decision was absolutely incorrect, and, in essence, was likely to demobilize the masses and stifle their initiative.

The movement developed widely, and could have become still wider if the Party had not taken a completely incorrect line from the very start.

But even when the movement had become very wide, and 25,000 veterans had gathered in Washington, the Polburo was still unable to give up its doctrinaire sectarian approach to it, and made the following decision: "Our comrades must take the line of carrying out the sharpest class differentiation in the camp of the veterans."

Instead of trying to extend the influence of the Workers Ex-

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Servicemen's League, which had been organized by us, and taking the leadership of the movement as a whole, the League was to isolate itself from the overwhelming majority of the veterans, from the petty-bourgeois sections, and hand them over to the fascist, Captain Waters, to Norman Thomas and to the Reverend Cox, the founder of the Blue Shirt fascist organization.

What is the use of such a policy? It is not a line for winning over the masses. It is the line of running away from the masses.

The tendency to hide from the masses led to strong vacillations on the question of the organization and leadership of the struggle of those hundreds of thousands of working families, who are at the same time the owners of small houses, against the government and the banks which are taking these houses away from these workers, for non-payment of taxes, or interest on mortgages. Such a movement, you see, is not a pure class movement, because in this struggle the working class is not counter-posed to the capitalists!

The same doctrinaire tendency causes doubts among the leadership on the question of the organization of the struggle of the workers and the petty-bourgeois strata against the automobile tax, which bears with equal weight on the poor little Ford, which is essential for the farmer or the worker, and the luxurious automobile of the millionaire.

In the U.S.A. there are enormous possibilities of mobilizing and organizing the masses.

At the present time, in the Northwestern states, there is developing a peculiar wide "strike" movement of farmers, directed towards raising prices. The farmers have organized many pickets, with the aim of raising prices, and they refuse to allow food to be taken into the towns.

These doubts and waverings, caused by the doctrinaire sectarian approach to the mass movement, must be very great in the present case, because this movement of the farmers is directed towards increasing the prices on food, which is plainly not advantageous to the workers as consumers.

I must examine this case in more detail. Higher prices on necessities are not advantageous to the workers. Therefore, it might be said that, in this case, the workers should act against the farmers.

Such a line of reasoning is absolutely incorrect. Such a tactical line would be a fatal political mistake, because objectively it would lead to our Party coming out against the farmers and in alliance with the bankers, the exploiting farmers, and the police, who are beating up the farmers' pickets.

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It would also be the grossest political mistake for the Party to declare itself neutral with regard to this movement on the grounds that, on the one hand, this movement is objectively revolutionary as it is directed against the capitalist system, but, on the other hand, it is antagonistic to the interests of the workers. Our Party can never win over the masses if it keeps neutral and neglects such objectively revolutionary movements.

The Party must call on the workers to support the movement of the ruined farmers for higher prices and for the annulment of importance of their joint struggle against the capitalist system, the workers for the struggle against wage-cuts, and for higher wages. The Party must explain to the workers and poor farmers the decisive importance of their joint struggle against the capitalist system, the necessity of the development and strengthening of their alliance in this struggle, the necessity of mutual aid in this struggle.

The deepening of the economic crisis, the end of capitalist stabilization, and the revolutionary upsurge are bringing with them tremendous mass movements, fighting actions of *all* the oppressed and exploited, with the most varied and frequently contradictory demands. If we get confused in these contradictions, if we hide from them, if we are content with friendly neutrality towards the petty bourgeois masses who are entering the fight against capitalism under reactionary slogans, we shall display the completest failure to understand how a popular revolution takes place, and what must be our attitude to mass movements.

Here is what Lenin wrote in connection with the question of the Irish Rebellion in 1916:

> "To imagine that a social revolution could possibly take place without the revolt of the little nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts on the part of the petty-bourgeoisie with all their prejudices, without the movement of the non-class-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against the oppression of the landlords, the church, the monarchy, the national bourgeoisie, etc.—to think this means *to abandon social revolution.* It would mean to draw up troops in one place and say: 'We are for Socialism'; and, in another place, and say: 'We are for imperialism,' and this will be the social revolution. . . . The Socialist revolution in Europe cannot be anything else but an outburst of the mass struggle of all the oppressed and discontented. Some of the petty-bourgeoisie and the backward workers will inevitably take part in it—without this participation it is impossible to have a *mass* struggle and impossible to have *any* revolution, and it is equally inevitable that they will bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and mistakes. But, *objectively,* they will attack *capital,* and the conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of the varied, many-voiced, diverse mass struggle, can unite and direct it, win the power, seize the banks, expropriate the trusts which are hated by all (although for different causes),

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and carry out other methods of dictatorship which, on the whole, will bring about the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of Socialism, which is not immediately 'cleansed' from petty-bourgeois dross" (Lenin, "Results of the Discussion on Self-Determination).

The decisive elimination of the doctrinaire sectarian approach to mass movements which dooms the Party to right opportunist backwardness, such is the central and all-deciding task of the British and American sections of the C.I. Without such an elimination, without a radical change in the approach to the masses, these Parties will be fated to a position in which the masses will pass by them and, at the best, they will sometimes, and in individual cases, be able to take charge of separate mass actions in a partisan manner, as was the case in Burnley and in Illinois; they will not be able to consolidate their influence on the masses firmly.

What are the basic conditions which are necessary to bring about this decisive change in the approach to the masses? There are two conditions: the reorganization of the Party on the basis of inner-Party democracy, and the formation of new cadres.

III.—INNER PARTY DEMOCRACY—THE FIRST FUNDAMENTAL CONDITION FOR THE WINNING OF THE MASSES.

I do not intend to speak of formal democracy, of the democracy which is preached by the social-democrats, and on the basis of which they have built up their party. I wish to talk about real Bolshevik democracy. What is Bolshevik democracy? It consists in drawing in all of the members of the Party into the political life of the Party, into the everyday work and struggle of the Party, into the collective work of preparing and leading mass struggles, into energetic comradely work on the basis of iron inner-Party discipline, because Bolshevik democracy does not exclude, but presupposes iron Party discipline.

"We understand democracy as the raising of the activity and class-consciousness of the Party masses, as the systematic attraction of the Party masses in practice, not only into the discussion of questions, but into the leaderhip of the work." (Stalin.)

There is still far too little of such genuine Bolshevik democracy in many sections of the C.I., and this is the first and basic cause why these sections cannot turn towards the broad masses.

I shall use chiefly American material for illustrating the question of inner-Party democracy, but such, if not all, that I shall say about the shortcomings in the development of Bolshevik democracy in the American Party applies also to other sections.

In practice, the Party members, the Party cells, are not drawn into political life. Politics is for the leading organs or, at best, for

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the activists. It never gets lower than the activists.

"The American comrades are afraid of political discussion; they have not organized any discussion for the study of the decisions of the 13th Plenum, and are not organizing any discussion for the study of the decisions of the 14th Plenum now. In the cells only organizational and technical questions are discussed, and the collection of money is the chief work." (From the report of the instructor of the C.I.)

Sometimes general Party meetings are called, but they are only for show. The speaker gives his speech, replies to questions, and at the end there is no discussion, no consideration whatever.

Can there be any question of initiative among the Party members and the lower Party organizations under such conditions?

With regard to the attitude towards the new Party members, here is a typical example from the C.P.U.S.A.

"During the last fights of the unemployed in N . . . . about 150 workers joined the Party. They received Party cards, and maybe were invited two or three times to the meetings of the Party organization, but only 30 out of 150 appeared at these meetings. Therefore, the others were put down as 'hopeless,' and no attempts were made to visit them at home, to consult them, to make them into active Party members, etc. Within a few weeks 120 of them were again lost for the Party." (From the letter of the instructor.)

The workers have to overcome tremendous difficulties to get into our Party.

I could give many facts showing that efforts to keep and to make the best use of Party workers are hindered by a formal bureaucratic understanding of Party discipline.

Here is still another example of exceptionally abnormal relations between the leaders and members of the organization. I am speaking of the Pittsburgh city organization. Over 70 per cent of the population of Pittsburgh consists of steel smelters and metal workers. Our organization had 66 members, of whom only two were workers in the steel industry.

The relations between the secretary of the District Committee and the members of the city organization were completely abnormal. The Secretariat of the District Committee looked on the whole city organization as a hive of opportunists who did not want to work, but wanted to be quiet, etc. The workers of the Party, and the trade unions, did not take any part in the everyday work of the city organization. To carry out this work, people were sent to Pittsburgh from New York and other Party organizations. All this still further deepened the impression of the members of the city

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organization that they were not considered as full members of the Party, and they were not recognized by the District Committee. The result of this unhealthy situation very soon made itself felt at the end of the strike. Oppositional feelings arose. The Secretariat of the District Committee reacted to this, describing the comrades as opportunists, slackers, demoralized elements, etc.

At the present time the Pittsburgh organization has become healthier; it has grown and strengthened. Almost all the old Party members are actively working.

Something similar to the events in Pittsburgh took place at Cleveland also.

The shortcomings of inner-Party democracy in the U.S.A. stand out with increasing prominence in the attitude taken up towards mass organizations. They are looked on and treated as a source of money.

Is it possible for a Party which suffers from big defects in the sphere of inner-Party democracy, such as the absence of political life in the cells, a formal and bureaucratic attitude to the question of securing new members for the Party, absolutely insufficient collective work in the leading organs, an impermissible attitude to mass organizations, an anti-democratic financial policy—is it possible for a Party with such defects to cope with the tasks which face it at the present time—the task of firmly attaching to itself those broad masses who are being aroused to the struggle by the crisis, and securing them for the Communist Party? No, it is impossible. It is precisely these shortcomings which explain the tremendous fluctuations in the Party membership.

A sharp change is necessary, a decisive change in the inner Party regime. Unless this takes place, the Party cannot become a mass Party. Unless this takes place, its numerical growth and the extension of its political influence will lag more and more behind the mass upsurge, and the Party will not eliminate its sectarianism, its separation from the basic strata of the native-born American workers.

This decisive change in the inner-Party life, this democratization of the Party, cannot be carried out unless new cadres are formed in the Party and the old ones strengthened.

IV.—THE RENEWAL AND STRENGTHENING OF CADRES AS THE SECOND BASIC LINK FOR THE WINNING OVER OF THE MASSES.

The tremendous importance of drawing in new cadres, the renewal of cadres, and the strengthening of these, evidently remains foreign to the American and English Parties up to the present time. They do not understand that new cadres form the future of the Party, and they stubbornly cling to the old cadres.

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"We get the impression," writes the instructor, "that the Party does not want to have new cadres at all. Some of the cadres, who have completely failed dozens of times in the districts, are again sent to other districts."

This shows, best of all, that a policy of securing new cadres is not carried on. The work is conducted with one and the same cadre, shifting them from one district to another, and, furthermore, they are chiefly New York cadres.

Here is what the instructor writes in connection with this question in the Pittsburgh organization:

"Simple workers were considered to be insufficiently trained to be accepted into the Party. Throughout the whole strike of the miners the city organization did not recruit a single member. There were undoubted symptoms of white chauvinism as well."

It must be remembered that the basic cadres of the English and American Communist Parties have not been changed for several years. These cadres grew up in the sectarian period of the existence of the Parties. Many of these comrades cannot get rid of their sectarian tendencies. It is precisely this part of the cadres which forms the chief hindrance to eliminating sectarianism.

With regard to the U.S.A., I should especially add that a certain part of the cadres grew up in conditions of unprincipled factional struggle, in other words, that this part of the cadres did not come forward because they were completely suitable for responsible political and organizational work. However, there are many facts showing that new cadres of leaders have arisen among the working masses, who have made themselves prominent in strikes in Britain, U.S.A., Belgium, etc., and that these new cadres are genuine mass workers, and incomparably more strongly connected with the masses than a large part of the old cadres, who are incapable of abandoning their sectarian tendencies. They have already been tested in experience, in Party work in Britain, where a visible improvement of our work in the factories, and the turn towards the masses is connected precisely with the entrance of these new cadres into the Party. They were tested by experience in the Party organization of Chicago. In those sections of Chicago in which new cadres were secured, the work improved, but in the sections where there are no new cadres it is in as deep a decline as it was before.

By enlarging our cadres, by bringing in new forces which have been thrown up by the masses in the ever-widening struggle, by drawing new cadres into the Party and ideologically training them, we shall link ourselves firmly, with the masses, renew and strengthen the Party cadres and put aside those who resist the drawing in of cadres, removing the fossilized sectarian elements from the leader-

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ship—this is our task. Unless this task is decisively carried out, there cannot be any turn away from sectarian isolation and toward the masses.

The British and American Parties are faced at present with four fundamental tasks:

(1) To direct the basic strategic blows against social-democracy, to win the masses away from it, to isolate it from the masses;

(2) To win over the majority of the proletariat and the poor farmers, to train them in a series of fights and to convert them into our political army;

(3) To organize our Party into a mass Party on the basis of Bolshevik inner-Party democracy based on iron discipline, into a revolutionary staff of this political army;

(4) To enlarge, strengthen and renew our Party general staff.

In 1925 Comrade Stalin described the revolutionary outlook as follows:

"The world revolutionary movement at the present moment has entered the zone of the ebb of revolution, but this ebb must give place to a flow which may end in the victory of the proletariat, but also may not end in this victory, but be replaced by a fresh ebb which, in turn, will give place to a new flow of the revolution." (Stalin, *Questions of Leninism.*)

The prophecy of Comrade Stalin was justified. We have now a new flow of revolution, and this flow may end in victory. But for England and the U.S.A. this victory is only possible if these four fundamental tasks are carried out: the destruction of social-democracy, the destruction of social-fascism, the formation of a mass political army, the conversion of the Party into the fighting staff of this army, and the formation of a strong general staff.

If they are able to carry out these tasks, then victory will be obtained in the second round of revolutions and wars.

But, however things may end in Britain and the U.S.A., it is quite clear that the basis of the world revolution, the U.S.S.R., will emerge from the second round of revolutions and wars larger and stronger.

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Unmasking an American Revisionist of Marxism

By V. J. JEROME

I.

Sidney Hook's acceptance of Marx expresses itself at the very opening of his essay [1] in the rejection of Marxism as a philosophic system. The attack is bold:

> "And yet, as soon as one devotes himself to the study of Marxian doctrine, he discovers that there exists no canonic formulation of its positions. Marx's literary activity, extending over a period of forty years, is for the most part extremely controversial. None of his writings contains a definitive and finished expression of doctrine. This is reflected in the various conflicting interpretations of Marx's thought which have split the ranks of his professed followers as well as those of his critics." [2]

In an effort to strengthen his thesis of the controversial nature of Marxism, Hook advances the argument:

> "The significance of the fact that every important work of Marx is entitled a *critique* (the sub-title of *Capital* is a "Critique of Political Economy") has never been properly grasped by the critics of Marx." [3]

From the outset, it becomes clear that the essential nature of Marxism is alien to the man who writes in this manner. He may fill pages with declarations that Marxism is "the fighting philosophy of the greatest mass movement which has swept Europe since Christianity"; but to see the "extremely controversial" nature of Marx's writings as evidencing the absence of system, is to see that mass movement only as a painted drop before which the drama of thought is enacted, as a historic background detached from its ideological currents. Marx developed the materialistic conception of history in decisive conflict with the idealist conceptions of the Young Hegelians. Through the attacks upon the metaphysical materialism

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[1] *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx*, reprinted from *The Symposium*, July 1931. All Hook quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from this essay, and will be designated by page reference.

[2] Page 325 (See Note 1).

[3] "The Meaning of Marxism," *The Modern Quarterly*, Vol. V, No. 4, p. 433.

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of Feuerbach, through the militant polemics against Produhon's false conception of dialectics, he forged materialist dialectics—the revolutionary weapon of the working class.

> "It does not hinder us," declares Marx to Ruge, "from linking our critique [of philosophy] to the critique of politics, from linking it to partisanship in politics, that is, to real struggles, and from identifying it with them. We do not therefore come before the world as doctrinaires with a new principle: Here is the truth, here kneel down! *We develop for the world new principles from the principles of the world.*" [4] (Italics mine.—V.J.J.)

Failure to grasp the full significance of these words is to miss the expressed unity of Marx's teachings. It is to miss the organic necessity for militant struggle to formulate and affirm those teachings against the host of anti-proletarian ideologies that sought to penetrate the ranks of the working class. Failure to perceive the inherence of struggle in the establishment of Marxism, constitutes a longing for quietism in the philosophy of the working class.

Hence, there is no point to the contention that "every important work of Marx is entitled a *critique*". To demolish this false assumption as to the nature of the Marxian critique, we have but to consider Marx's own statements of purpose. In the preface to the second edition of Capital—the work which Hook pre-eminently cites for its sub-title, *A Critique of Political Economy*, Marx says, in discussing the critique of bourgeois economy:

> "So far as such criticism represents a class, it can only represent the class whose vocation in history is the overthrow of the capitalist mode of production and the final abolition of all classes—the proletariat."

At the time of the writing of *Capital*, as Marx tells us, the open class conflict in England and France had reduced bourgeois economy from theoretic investigation to master-class expedient. In Germany, where due to specific historic conditions, the capitalist mode of production was belated in its development, the rise of the bourgeoisie was attended by the rise of a proletariat whose class consciousness had been accelerated by the reverberations of class battles in England and France. Bourgeois economy everywhere could no longer afford to be self-critical; the criticism of bourgeois economy could come only from the class critical of it.

This is the meaning of the sub-title, *A Critique of Political Economy*—not a polemic against polemic, not critique contra critique,

[4] "*Brief an Ruge*" im September, 1843 (*Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels*, 1841 *bis* 1850, *Bd.* I, *S.* 382).

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but the critique directed by the revolutionary principles of the proletariat against the last antagonistic mode of production.

Again, in the preface to the first edition of *Capital*, we find Marx declaring:

> "It is the ultimate aim of this work to reveal the economic law of motion of modern society."

In this, Marx clearly states that his critique is but the road to conclusion, that his law is the necessary outcome of his method. One may, like Duehring, or Boehm-Bawerk, or Bernstein, openly seek to disprove the validity of Marx's law and thereby to bring into question the method. But, to characterize Marxism, *in the name of Marx*, as doctrineless, and at the same time attempt to keep the method, constitutes, in the face of Marx's cited affirmation of his purpose, an attempt to evade open opposition to Marxism.

What can be the purpose of this insistence on the absence of doctrinal conclusions in Marx's works? The answer is present in the above-quoted passage from Hook, according to which the lack of definitive doctrine

> " . . . is reflected in the various conflicting interpretations of Marx's thought which have split the ranks of his professed followers as well as those of his critics."

The statement can have but one meaning. The burden of the distortions of Marxism must not be allowed to fall on the distorters; it must be lodged with Marx himself. Marxism must be so painted as to have it appear a teaching that is the cause of its own perversion. How better could one prepare the ground for revisionism in general and one's own revisionism in particular!

Of a professed Marxian we have the right, of course, to ask: what of the class motivations of the various conflicting interpretations of Marxism? For answer we get:

> "Of itself, however, this diversity of interpretation is not an unusual thing in the history of thought. There has been hardly a single thinker of historical importance who has not paid a price for having disciples; who has not been many things to many men. There is no canonic life of Christ as there is no canonic interpretation of Plato." [5]

It is significant in this connection to refer to Lenin's opening chapter of his *State and Revolution*, in which he demonstrates that the treatment accorded to Marx's teachings by the bourgeoisie had its historic parallels in the treatment meted out to the revolutionary

[5] p. 326 (See Note 1).

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teachings throughout history by the various oppressor classes. Lenin puts it as follows:

> "Marx's doctrines are now undergoing the same fate, which, more than once in the course of history, has befallen the doctrines of other revolutionary thinkers and leaders of oppressed classes struggling for emancipation. During the lifetime of great revolutionaries, the oppressing classes have invariably meted out to them relentless persecution, and received their teaching with the most savage hostility, most furious hatred, and a ruthless campaign of lies and slanders. After their death, however, attempts are usually made to turn them into harmless saints, canonizing them, as it were, and investing their name with a certain halo by way of 'consolation' to the oppressed classes, and with the object of duping them; while at the same time emasculating and vulgarizing the real essence of their revolutionary theories and blunting their revolutionary edge. At the present time the bourgeoisie and the opportunists within the labor movement are co-operating in this work of adulterating Marxism. They omit, obliterate and distort the revolutionary side of its teaching, its revolutionary spirit, and push to the foreground and extol what is, or seems, acceptable to the bourgeoisie."

Set Hook's crassly metaphysical interpretation of the subject against Lenin's clear class analysis, and all its shallowness is revealed. Lenin explains the rejections, the manglings, and the hypocritical acceptances in terms of the shifting interests of the class in power. His explanation is dialectic-materialist. Hook explains the conflicting interpretations of revolutionary theories in terms of a hidden eternal principle; the fate in store for those that engender disciples. By this theory, the suppression, the corruption, and the betrayal of Marxism are to be explained, not in terms of the class interests of the bourgeoisie manifesting themselves without and within the ranks of the proletariat, but as an organic failing of Marx, the begetter of disciples. But it would be the grossest error to pass this interpretation by as mere mystical drivel, as the fatalistic doctrine of eternal recurrence; for us its real significance lies in the fact *that it is a subtle veiling of the class basis of revisionism.*

But, alongside of this metaphysical version of deviating discipleships, we are offered "in Marx's case" an added factor. This, Hook tells us, is the mistaken attempt to arrive at Marx's thought-system through his generalized conclusions rather than through his methodology. Here, at last, we have the thesis plainly stated. For, lest one still imagine that in denying explicit doctrine to Marx's writings Hook seeks to ascribe to them a doctrinal content that is implicit rather than formulated, he need but read the further passage:

> "If Marx's thought possesses unity, it is to be found not in his specific conclusions but in his method of analysis. The method, to be sure, is to be checked up in the light of his conclusions, but the latter are derivative, not central. They may be impugned without

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necessarily calling the method into question. They are tentative and contingent." [7]

It resolves itself, then, into the purpose of denying unity to Marx's teachings, of divorcing Marxian theory from Marxian practice—divorcing, by declaring Marxian analysis incapable of rising to synthesis; by regarding Marxian principle as non-fundamental, provisional, and wholly incidental to Marxian practice.

But separating Marxian theory and method from each other means separating the doctrine of surplus value, the doctrine of the class struggle, and the materialist conception of history—the three component parts of Marxism—from one another. It means dismembering Marxism! It means destroying the guiding revolutionary theory of the working class!

It was to guard against all such attempts to disarm revolutionary practice by nullifying Marxian theory that Stalin wrote:

" . . . for it [theory], and it alone, can give the movement confidence, guidance, an understanding of the inner links between events; it alone can enable those engaged in the practical struggle *to understand the whence and the whither of the working class movement.*" (Italics mine.—V. J. J.) [8]

It was to guard against all such attempts to dismember the Marxian system that Lenin never failed to stress the basic unity of Marx's teachings. Thus, in 1913 he declared in clearly ringing language that Marxism is a system, that it

"is complete and symmetrical, offering an integrated view of the world. . . . " [9]

Stalin speaks of the zealousness with which Lenin worked to maintain the purity of the proletarian ideology:

"The immense importance attached by Lenin to theory is perhaps best shown by this, that he himself undertook the great task of generalising, on behalf of materialistic philosophy, the main achievements of science since the days of Engels, and of comprehensively criticising the anti-materialistic trends of certain Marxists. Engels said that 'materialism should take on a new aspect with each new discovery.' For his own epoch, Lenin performed this task in his remarkable work *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Plekhanoff, on the other hand, though he had been so ready to condemn Lenin for 'indifference to philosophy', did not himself make a serious attempt to perform the necessary task." [10]

Hook, too, speaks of *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. His reaction to the great Marxist-Leninist classic, in which he could find

[7] p. 327 (see Note 1).
[8] *Leninism*, International Publishers, New York, p. 94.
[9] "The Three Sources and Three Constituent Parts of Marxism."
[10] *Leninism*, p. 95.

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nothing but a trenchant refutation of his own position, is expressed in such words as:

> "The whole book is characterized by a slavish acceptance of what Lenin conceives 'orthodox' Marxism to be." [11] or:
>
> "Its style is peppered with opprobrious epithets and will turn the stomach of anyone who is unacquainted with the controversial literature of Marxism. But the defects of Lenin's style are the defects of a tradition." [11]

Turn the stomach! Such is the profound disgust this pretender that calls himself a Marxian feels at reading the work of the greatest of Marxians! But behind this purported hatred of the style of Lenin lurks a hatred of the *substance* of Lenin—a hatred that has found similar expressions of disgust from the mouths and pens of every renegade, of every social-fascist and outright reactionary.

Hook sees in Lenin's style "the defects of a tradition".

To what tradition does Hook refer? To the tradition of struggle for maintaining the purity of revolutionary theory, for maintaining the unity of that theory with revolutionary practice, the tradition of Marx and Engels.

In quite another tradition Hook demurs:

> "Lenin's polemic against Bogdanov is unconvincing. Lenin shows himself an expert in beheading straw men. . . . Criticism of this sort is unconscionable." [11]

Leninist criticism would naturally appear unconscionable to a "dialectician" who can see in the war against the subjectivism of Mach and Avenarius "an attack on an alleged subjectivism",[11] to a "materialist" who can reply to Lenin's warning against revisionist attempts to undermine materialism by smuggling in religionism that:

> "God is dangerous to the social revolution only if he is an active God." [11]

But if Hook shows this utter contempt for Lenin, he has at least a good word to say for certain "Marxists" who surely cannot be charged with a "slavish acceptance" of Marxism:

> "The debit side of dialectic materialism is heavy . . . " Hook sighs. "Nowhere in all its literature save among the revisionist Germans is there a forthright analysis of such fundamental categories as 'cause', 'law', 'history', etc." [11]

Nowhere—not in Marx, not in Engels, not in Lenin, nowhere

[11] *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. XXV, No. 6.

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except in German revisionism can Hook find the true Marxism! Better spoken: Not in Marx, nor in Engels, nor in Lenin, but in German revisionism, in Bernstein, in Kautsky, in Hilferding, can Hook mirror *his own* Marxism.

Hook further betrays his anti-Marxian designs when he charges Engels with distorting Marx in accepting Marx's economic doctrines as a "closed deductive system" [12] rather than as "an illustration of a method of revolutionary criticism." [13] To Hook, in fact, the economic teachings of Karl Marx and the doctrine of the class struggle are not component elements of Marxism. As proof positive that the doctrine of surplus value is not basic to Marixsm, he brings forward the idea of

> ". . . the revolutionary philosophy of the *Communist Manifesto* in which the labor theory of value is not even mentioned." [14]

According to this view the *Communist Manifesto* is not based on the doctrine of surplus value, the revolutionary struggle to which the proletariat is summoned does not arise from capitalist exploitation of the working class! What Hook fails to reconcile, however, is how Engels, whom he adjudges guilty of "a definite deviation from Marx's own views" [15] in holding the Marxian economic laws to be objective and scientific (as editor of *Capital II* and *III*), could also have been co-author of the *Manifesto,* which, as Hook claims, utterly fails to mention the labor theory of value.

Hook cannot solve this contradiction without revealing himself as a falsifier of Marxism, as an employer of the tactics of the Second International opportunists who sought to justify their anti-Marxism by libellous assertions designed to deny the continuity of Marxism in Engels. The question is not: Where is the labor theory of value mentioned in the *Comunist Manifesto?* but: Where is it not mentioned? The letter and spirit of every sentence in the *Manifesto* refute the Hookian assertion that that doctrine is absent in Marxism. What are these words but the doctrine of the class struggle?

> "But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians." [16]

What is the essence of these words but the labor theory of value?

> "Hence, the cost of production of a workman is restricted almost entirely to the means of subsistence that he requires for his mainte-

[12] p. 332 (see Note 1).
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid, p.335.
[15] Ibid, p. 333.
[16] *Communist Manifesto.*

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nance, and for the propagation of his race. But the price of a commodity, and also of labor, is equal to its cost of production." [16a]

What is the meaning of the *Communist Manifesto* unless it bases itself, as Utopian Socialism did not, on a scientific understanding of the nature and historic role of capitalism—an understanding that led Marx and Engels to formulate the doctrines of surplus value and the class struggle as indisseverable from the materialist conception of history?

The Marxist-Leninist theory of knowledge admits of no breach between things and the conceptions arising from them. The very life-force in dialectic materialism inheres precisely in this: It has, on the one hand, overcome the plodding method of nominalism, which, denying to knowledge the attainment of universal concepts, leads inevitably into the blind alley of agnosticism. On the other hand, it has taken the ground from under the barren dogmatics of realism which, by granting reality to universals only and viewing particulars as illusory, leads to conclusions that can never be more than restatements of its assumed universals. A dialectic materialism, therefore, that is powerless to reveal adequate knowledge of objective reality is essentially no advance on nominalism. May it be ever so fascinating as a methodology to a Hook, it can mean to him nothing more than a form of intellectual gymnastics.

To the working class, its philosophy is of more serious import. To the proletariat, only that philosophy can be acceptable which is its world-outlook; which provides the underlying theory of the nature and historic process of the class struggle; which leads, through a methodology involving the inter-relation of proletarian activity and theory as criteria of each other, to the decisive resolution of the class conflict through the overthrow of capitalism. "You have a world to gain!" is not an empty rhetorical finale to the *Communist Manifesto;* it is the essential objective outcome of the analysis: "The history of all human society past and present has been the history of class struggles."

In Hook's "Marxism," practice becomes an autonomous form, issuing out of nowhere and leading to no objective principle beyond itself. The "Marxian" practice of Hook is a Methodological Absolute, involving a conception of knowledge in which theory *may* attach itself to practice, but not as an inner, guiding principle. It stands, in effect, outside of the dialectic-materialist theory of knowledge.

The denial to Marxism of the knowledge of objective truth is reminiscent of the attempt of Bogdanov to reduce Marxism to rela-

[16a] *Communist Manifesto.*

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tivism—a thesis against which Lenin directed relentless criticism.

> "The materialist dialectics of Marx and Engels," declared Lenin, "certainly does contain relativism, but it is not reduced to it, that is, it recognizes the relativity of all our knowledge, not in the sense of the denial of objective truth, but in the sense of the historical conditions which determine the degrees of our knowledge as it approaches the truth." [17]

It is clear from this that the Marxist-Leninist theory of knowledge holds to no static, metaphysical Absolute, but, on the contrary, views cognition as a dialectic process on the basis of material practice leading to ever higher phases of knowledge of the material world. Relativism negates the notion of objective truth; dialectic materialism includes relative truth, but proceeds thereby to the knowledge of the still unknown.

This is what Engels meant when he spoke of transforming "thing in itself" into "thing for us." [18]

This, too, is what Lenin meant when, referring to Engels' expression, he wrote:

> "That is profoundly put: the thing in itself and its transformation into the thing for us (see Engels). The thing in itself is in general an empty, lifeless abstraction. In life, in movement, everything is both 'in itself' and 'for others'; the one condition stands in a relationship to the other, passes into the other." [19]

Hook's methodological "Marxism" proceeds from an utter incapacity to grasp the interaction of dialectics and materialism. For what was it that impelled Marx to revolutionize Hegel's dialectic method which had elicited from him and from Engels repeated expressions of indebtedness and which later brought from Lenin the avowed desire to see the contributing editors of the Soviet periodical *Under the Banner of Marxism* form themselves into "a sort of 'Society of Materialist Friends of Hegelian Dialectics' "? [20]

In his well-known preface to the second edition of *Capital*, Vol. 1, Marx tells us:

> "My dialectic method is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To Hegel, the life-process of the human brain, i. e., the process of thinking, which, under the name of 'the idea' he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of 'the Idea'. With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing

[17] *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, International Publishers, New York, p. 108.

[18] *Feuerbach*, Chas. H. Kerr & Co., Chicago, p. 61.

[19] "The Concept of Hegel's 'Science of Logic'," *Under the Banner of Marxism*, 1925, No. 1 (Russian).

[20] *Under the Banner of Marxism*, March, 1922 (Russian).

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> else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought . . . With him it [dialectics] is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again,[21] if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell."

The assumption of an evolving idea-process as the substance of objective reality affords, despite the dialectic nature of that process, no dialectic transition from material being to concept. There is lacking in the Hegelian phenomenology the adequate subject-object relationship for the knowledge of independent reality. It was to liberate dialectics from its idealistic contradiction that Marx revolutionized dialectics. In so doing, Marx not only rendered idealist into materialist dialectics, but postulated materialism as that inalienable correlative without which dialectics loses its potency, without which in fact dialectics sinks into anti-dialectics.

Hook, taking issue with Marx, says:

> "Just as it is possible to dissociate the Hegelian method from the Hegelian system (as Marx and Engels repeatedly insist), so it is possible to dissociate the Marxian method from any specific set of conclusions." [22]

Expounded, Hook's analogy means that the bourgeoisdom of Hegel and the Communism of Marx may alike be torn from the respective methods of which they are the conclusions. Expounded, the analogy means that since the conclusions of Marx are not the necessary outcome of his method, materialism, like idealism, fails dialectics as a co-operant factor in determining objective truth. Expounded, the analogy means that dialectics remains essentially ineffectual, whether it stand on its head or right-side up, whether its nature be Hegelian or Marxian. This, then, is the meaning of Hook's exaltation of method!

Let us further test the validity of Hook's analogy. We have seen what made it possible for Marx to sever the Hegelian method from the Hegelian system. Marx saw the basic inadequacy of Hegel, notwithstanding the latter's demolition of Kantian subjectivism with its know-nothingness before a transcendent world. For, Hegel's monism, expressing itself through an ontological Idea-process, soon became, despite the immanence of the idea in its phenomenal forms, mystically dualized: teleological, consciously purposeful Reason unfolding into external nature and history; the autobiography of God writing itself through the annals of humanity. With truth Marx says:

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[21] The term in the original is *umstuelpen*, which means *to turn over*. When the English translators employ the world *again* they introduce a serious error in conception, since thereby Marx's action upon the Hegelian dialectics is reduced from a revolutionary to a restorative mutation.

[22] p. 327 (see Note 1).

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> "Hegel's conception of history presupposes an abstract or absolute Mind [*Geist*], which develops in such wise that mankind is a mere mass consciously or unconsciously bearing it. Within the empirical, exoteric history he allows precedence to a speculative, esoteric history." [24]

In Hegel's philosophy of history, Reason, from a first principle unfolding toward self-realization *through nature*, becomes a *Super-Nature*, becomes Spirit, becomes God, becomes Christianity—Prusso-Christianity: For God and for Kaiser!

The dialectics that Hegel fashioned availed him little. In his idealist hand, dialectics was a sword of steel sheathed in a scabbard of mysticism. It was the essential antagonism of dialectics to idealism that demanded the separation of the two. It was because without each other, neither dialectics nor materialism could realize itself, that Marx, to forge the powerful and decisive ideological weapon of the working class, was impelled to coalesce the dialectic method of Hegel and the best in philosophic materialism into dialectic materialism.

Hence, when Hook contends that it is as logical to dissociate Marx's conclusions from Marx's method as it is to dissociate Hegel's system from Hegel's method, he categorically rejects dialectic materialism.

II.

Hook's "Marxism" turns out in fact to be but a modish euphemism for the logic of the pragmatists and the instrumentalists. Haven't we it from William James himself that

> ". . . it [pragmatism] does not stand for any special results. It is a method only. . . ." ? [25]

And haven't we his cheering guarantee that at last, through pragmatism—

> "Science and metaphysics would come much nearer together, would in fact work absolutely hand in hand." ? [26]

The method of pragmatism is in fact that celebrated hotel-corridor leading to innumerable chambers:

> "In one you may find a man writing an atheistic volume, in the next some one on his knees praying for faith and strength; in a third a chemist investigating a body's properties. In a fourth a system of idealistic metaphysics is being cogitated." [27]

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[24] *Die Heilige Familie* (*Aus dem literar. Nachlass von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels, Bd.* II, *S.* 186).
[25] *Pragmatism*, p. 51.
[26] *Ibid*, p. 52.
[27] *Ibid*, p. 54.

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To Hook, Marxism is a similar hotel-corridor. The difference between Hook and James is largely a question of outspokenness. James frankly advances his thesis of "the pluralistic universe", of a world atomized into many unrelated worlds, to the point of naming the various radically differing outcomes of his methodology. Hook conceives Marxian knowledge as a complex of hypotheses without, however, committing himself to more than the proposition that any given Marxian conclusion is inacceptable as the sole conclusion. Hook's logical method is more akin to that of John Dewey, with whom the man seeking his way through the multi-chambered corridor becomes transformed into a man lost in the woods, but with the ends of the devious paths uncharted. For Dewey's lost man there is no knowledge of the way out of the woods. Knowledge comes to him only *after* he has found his way out, "after the event". Knowledge, accordingly, resides solely in verification, not in the systematically inferred principle as a guide to practice:

> "The true means the verified and means nothing else." [28]

Thus, in the case of our man lost in the woods—

> "Suppose, by means of its specifications, one works one's way along until one comes upon familiar ground—finds one's self. *Now*, one may say, My idea was right, it was in accord with facts; it agrees with reality." [29]

This view is further generalized in the following passage:

> "Nevertheless, thought or inference becomes knowledge in the complete sense of the word only when the indication or signifying is borne out, verified in something directly present, or immediately *experienced*—not immediately known. The object has to be 'reached' eventually in order to get verification or invalidation, and when so reached it is immediately present . . . Short of verificatory objects directly present, we have not knowledge, but inference whose content is *hypothetical*. The subject matter of inference is a candidate or claim to knowledge requiring to have its value tested. . . ." [30]

Essentially the James-Dewey philosophy is idealist and reactionary, differing from its idealist progenitors chiefly in that it cloaks itself in a terminology of progressivism. Despite its emphasis on "the experienced" as the criterion of truth, the instrumental theory of knowledge employs experience as an *a priori* psychic concept, as a principle preceding experience. The following passage from *Experience and Nature* [31] leaves no doubt as to Dewey's idealism:

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[28] *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, Henry Holt, New York, p. 160.
[29] *Essays in Experimental Logic*, University of Chicago Press, p. 240.
[30] *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. XIX, p. 353.
[31] p. 8.

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> "Without sun, moon and stars, mountains and rivers, forests and mines, soil, rain and wind, history would not be. These things are not just external conditions of history and experience; they are integral with them. But also *without the human attitude and interest, without record and interpretation,* these things would not be historical." (Italics mine.—V. J. J.)

To hold that natural phenomena are not external conditions of human experience but are *integral* with experience, to hold that the historicity or truth of natural phenomena depends on the human attitude and interest, is to assert that without the subject man, nature would not be, is to deny independent and primary existence to the material world.

. . The position of Dewey is here shown to be definitely metaphysical. We have here the unmistakable subjective idealistic element of primordial human reason possessed of inborn attributes of time, space, and causality wherewith to contribute historical order into the empirically established phenomenal world.

Likewise, the pragmatist-instrumentalist theory of the true as the useful, as that which has satisfactorily worked, "which has made good" is patently subjective. "Made good" for whom? Religion has made good for the exploiting classes; it is therefore true. Conversely, religion has failed to make good for the slaves and the serfs and the proletarians; it is therefore untrue. Dewey would answer that by workability instrumentalism means social workability "in the long run." But in so doing, does he not flee from the consequence of openly admitting his subjectivism to take cover under a protective phrase? For, in less guarded moments, he reveals only too unmistakably the class interests served by his instrumental theory of truth. And that those interests are not of the proletariat, who is in better authority to say than Dewey himself?

> ". . . it may be," he tells us—not without yearning, "that the symptoms of religious ebb as conventionally interpreted are symptoms of the coming of a fuller and deeper religion." [32]

The antagonism of science and religion appears to him as the conflict of

> "the dry, thin and meagre scientific standpoint with the obstinately persisting body of warm and abounding imaginative beliefs." [33]

To cap it all, he gives us his cloying prophecy that—

> "The religious spirit will be revivified because it will be in harmony with men's unquestioned scientific beliefs. . . . It will not

[32] "Religion in Our Schools," *Hibbert Journal,* Vol. VI, p. 808.
[33] *Reconstruction in Philosophy,* p. 211.

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> be obliged to lead a timid, half-concealed and half-apologetic life because tied to scientific ideas and social creeds that are continually eaten into and broken down." [34]

For a bigger and better religion!—cries this American bourgeois in cap and gown.

It does not take long to recognize that the entire American-bred James-Dewey philosophy of truth when it "gets there" is but the philosophic counterpart of an assertive, arrogant, vulgar, super-successful bourgeoisie that has "arrived," that has "made good," that has, in James' phrase, "cashed in," and therefore deems itself true—to the point of granting only a hypothetical character, the candidate-status, to all ideas that have not proved their mettle through immediate experience. The free competition of ideas! The democracy of hypotheses!

It is with this reactionary philosophy that Hook seeks to confuse Marxism.

> "*Dialectic materialism,*" Hook tells us, "*must take its cues from the scientific pragmatism of Dewey.*" (Italics mine.—V.J.J.) [35]

Hook the Deweyan sees Marx metempsychosed into the bourgeois professor emeritus of Columbia University. In Hook's words:

> "Marxism therefore appears in the main as a huge judgment of practice, in Dewey's sense of the phrase, and its truth or falsity (instrumental adequacy) is an experimental matter. Believing it and acting upon it helps make it true or false." [35a]

Our present contention being, however, not with Dewey as Dewey, but with Dewey as Marx (as Hook has presented him to us), let us orientate the discussion accordingly. Let us hypothesize a Marxian theory of knowledge in which methodology is unconditioned by conclusions, in which doctrine depends for its validation on its being borne out in *immediate* experience. Calling Dewey's "woods" the contradictions of capitalism, and the man lost in it, society, let us assume it possible for Marx and Engels, within such a theory of knowledge, to have demonstrated by analysis that—

> "The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeosie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by their involuntary combination, due to association. The development of modern industry, therefore, *cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates*

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 210.

[35] *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. XXV, No. 6, p. 154.

[35a] "Marxism and Metaphysics", *The Modern Quarterly*, Vol. IV, No. 4, p. 391.

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products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, is its own grave-diggers." [36]

By Hook's pragmatist "Marxian" methodology, however, the conclusion of Marx and Engels that "its [the bourgeoisie's] fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable" [37] is, in the capitalist world, merely "a candidate or claim to knowledge requiring to have its value tested".

In other words, the Marxian, i.e., proletarian-revolutionary way out of the capitalist woods cannot, during capitalism, lay claim to being the true, the only way out.

The answer, then, to the Marxian doctrine of the inevitable overthrow of the capitalist order by the proletariat is—provisional doubt. Not the provisional doubt science sets for itself as a springboard to knowledge, but a provisional doubt that remains an enduring doubt *against* knowledge. For, our instrumentalists, graduating through a purely quantitative calculus to "the last term" of the series, the reaching of which involves no dialectic transformation of quantity into quality (prior to the realization of the transformation "after the event") are, when all is said, instrumentalizing with a logic that is crassly metaphysical. The essential nature of the last term remains with the instrumentalists coordinal, equal in rank, with the first. Against the revolutionary way out of capitalism, Dewey proposes the way of accretion, the way of reform. The man in the woods has no prospective knowledge of his disentanglement from the maze of paths; he has only paths before him—proposed roads, not *the road*. The attempt is made by Dewey to represent the experimental questing itself as the idea:

". . . What the experimental means is that the effective working of an idea and its truth are one and the same thing. . . ." [38]

Yet what is this but an undialectic identification, instead of unification, of theory and practice? What is this but a senseless redundancy which, rendering the goal indistinguishable from the road, blurs the goal and blurs the road? What is this in fact but a metaphysical device of investing the road with "goalness"—the road that is presented as ultimately goalless?

The nihilistic outcome of instrumentalism is not unrecognized by Dewey. In fact, under the name of "healthy skepticism", it is rendered by him into the motive principle of his functional logic:

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[36] *Communist Manifesto.*
[37] Ibid.
[38] *Influence of Darwin and Other Essays.*

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> "The assumption of a plurality of hypotheses as applicable (that is as worth trying to apply) to the same set of facts is of the essence of skepticism. . . . Part of the worth of competing hypotheses and of the method of successive elisions is that it fosters precisely this healthy skepticism." [39]

One perceives in this statement, not the employment of a working skepticism to foster healthy conclusions, but, on the contrary, the use of inductive inferences to foster "healthy skepticism". Perpetual skepticism as to outcome, fetishistic abstraction of method, this is the high-sounding pragmatist - instrumentalist - functionalist-experimentalist, but withal metaphysicist, logic.

And it is this logic that Hook attempts to present as Marxian. It is this bankrupt theory of knowledge that Hook seeks to redeem with Marx's name. In his quarrel with Max Eastman, Hook goes so far as to pit Karl Marx against Max Eastman for the right to be declared the true instrumentalist (!):

> "Marx," Hook rules, "is much truer to the spirit of the instrumentalist logic than is Eastman. . . ." [40]

Marx is thus declared a true posthumous disciple of John Dewey—the same John Dewey whose instrumentalist logic led him to support American imperialism in the World War, the same John Dewey who today heads the capitalist third party movement known as the League for Independent Political Action, and is a blatant supporter of the social-fascist presidential candidate, Norman Thomas!

It is very modest of Hook not to put himself forward as the true Deweyan, but to accord the honor to Marx. With due regard, however, for Hook's, *and not Marx's*, right to that honor, let us establish Hook in his rightful position.

The Marxist position is categorically stated by Lenin:

> "*The teaching of Marx is all-powerful because it is true.*" (Italics mine.—V. J. J.) [41]

Hook's position is diametrically opposed to Lenin's:

> "Marx's method is 'truer' [note Hook's skeptical quotation marks.—V.J.J.] than others because it is more effective." [42]

He adds in defense of his pragmatist position that Marxism is merely "more effective", but not objectively true and all-powerful:

> "To counter by saying that it is more effective because it is truer

[39] *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. XIX, p. 35.

[40] "Marxism and Metaphysics," *The Modern Quarterly*, Vol. IV, No. 4, p. 392.

[41] "The Three Sources and Three Constituent Parts of Marxism."

[42] "From Hegel to Marx," *The Modern Quarterly*, Summer, 1932, p. 43.

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is to utter a proposition that can never be tested without reference to further effectiveness." [42a]

Hook's opposition to Marx and Lenin could not have been more clearly stated. In a most summary form he declares himself categorically against Marxist-Leninist theory. Or, if one will, he is willing to suspend judgment until the theory proves itself effective. The seizure of power by the working class? Yes—perhaps. But let us not come to any hasty decision as to its truth now. Time enough for that if the workers succeed in seizing power.

Until then, Sidney Hook?

Until then, of course, there can be no talk of revolutionary practice.

Throughout his treatment of the subject of Marxism, Hook is unfailingly loyal to the Deweyan doctrine of perpetual skepticism. It is this instrumentalist outlook that enables Hook to say of Marxism:

"Each age has brought a new refutation and a new defence until in the welter of denial and counter-denial the meaning of Marxism has become *vague and obscure.* In some quarters it has become an epithet of abuse; in others, an honorific term for militant class-consciousness. In Russia, it is a symbol of revolutionary theology; in Germany, of a vague social religion; in France, of social reform, and in England and America, of wrong-headed political tactics. The trouble has been that both friend and foe have been more anxious to discover whether Marxism is true or false than what Marxism, as a system of thought contained in the writings of Karl Marx, actually means." [43] (Italics mine.—V.J.J.)

This is the logical position that the instrumentalist is compelled to take with regard to Marxism—namely, that Marxism as a teaching has become vague and obscure. For, if the value of Marxism lies, not in its truth, but in its instrumentality (whatever this may mean), it is inevitable that the truth of Marxism should have been doomed to remain forever the subject of insoluble controversy among disputants equally fatuous, since there is no Marxian doctrine. Again, if Marxism is merely a sociological methodology and not a philosophy, a world-outlook with its theory of knowledge, it can undertake no scientific prediction of outcome or goal. Hence, to speak of the classless society, of Communism, is to speak, not in terms of knowledge, but in terms of faith. Hook is therefore utterly consistent with his instrumentalism in seeing the Marxist-Leninist building of Socialism in the Soviet Union as nothing but "a symbol

[42a] *Iibid.*

[43] "The Meaning of Marxism," *The Modern Quarterly,* Vol V, No. 4, p. 430.

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of revolutionary theology," in appraising the struggle of the German working class for proletarian dictatorship as a "vague social religion". Finally, if Marxism affords no prospective knowledge of the only way out of capitalism, the Marxist-Leninist Party that formulates its program, its policy, its strategy, and its tactics on the assumption that Marxism does provide the only way out, cannot, of course, give leadership to the masses.

There can therefore be no point of contact, but only one of opposition, between Marxism and Hook's theory of it. There can be only sharp struggle between Hook's proposal of an instrumentalist basis for revolutionary strategy—a basis of perpetual trial-and-error, of speculation along many paths, and the basis of Communist strategy and tactics as clearly formulated by Lenin:

> "The basis for correct revolutionary practice and policies is the strategy and tactics *based upon the concrete objective truth, which flow from the general fundamental laws of Marxian theory*. Following the direction of Marxian theory, we shall draw nearer and nearer to the objective truth (without exhausting it); following another path we shall arrive at confusion and falsehood." (Italics mine—V.J.J.)

The practice of instrumentalism stands in direct antithesis to the practice of Marxism-Leninsm. Concretely, Dewey expresses that antithesis by his support of the anti-revolutionary political tactics of the Socialist Party. Concretely, Hook expresses it by charging "wrong-headed political tactics" against the Communist Party.

It should be understood, of course, that Hook's charge against the tactics of the Communist Party has absolutely nothing in common with Bolshevik self-criticism, but is based on opposition to the fundamental principles of Marxist-Leninst strategy and tactics.

Marxism-Leninism has always waged an incessant struggle on the two philosophic fronts—against vulgar mechanistic materialism as well as against idealist revisionism, which have their political expression, on the one hand, in Rightist reform policy, and on the other, in the Leftist fatalistic conception of the automatic collapse of capitalism. On both fronts the struggle has had to be waged, and is now most intensively being waged under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, to preserve and maintain the revolutionary basis of proletarian strategy and tactics.

The formulation of militant materialism, of the basic unity of revolutionary theory and practice was long ago formulated by Marx in his Theses on Feuerbach. The eleventh thesis reads:

> "Hitherto philosophers have merely interpreted the world variously; the time has now come to change it."

Hook makes much of his remembering this passage from Marx.

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But his retentive memory, alas, is unaccompanied by clear understanding. For this aphoristic statement of Marx, designed to render Feuerbach's materialism militant, was in no way meant to *substitute* revolutionary practice for revolutionary theory, but, on the contrary, to bring the two *into dialectic unity*. Hook merely succeeds in showing himself a distorter of Marxism when on the basis of the Theses on Feuerbach he terms Marxism "nascent instrumentalism"! Marxism—an instrumentalism not yet grown up into its full Deweyan form! (See current syllabus of the New School for Social Research, announcing a lecture by Hook on Marxism as "nascent instrumentalism".)

III

But not with Dewey alone is Hook at one. For how manifestly are his conclusions derived from the signal words pronounced by Eduard Bernstein in 1899:

> "To me that which is generally called the ultimate of Socialism, is nothing, but the movement everything." [44]

The words of the Neo-Kantian revisionist, the message of skepticism as to the revolution, became the credo of the Second International:

> "I set myself," declared Bernstein, "against the notion that we have to expect shortly a collapse of the bourgeois economy, and that social democracy should be induced by the prospect of such an imminent, great, social catastrophe to adapt its tactics to that assumption. That I maintain most emphatically." [45]

Hook takes up the defense of Eduard Bernstein. He does this with the full awareness that Bernstein's slogan "Kant against cant" was a rallying cry for the rejection of both the materialist essence and the dialectic method of Marxism. As the world and Sidney Hook know, Bernstein's neo-Kantianism meant a denial of the scientific nature and the objectivity of Marxism, a declaration that the laws underlying the social process are inaccessible to our knowledge. Even as in the Kantian system the things in themselves exist beyond our ken in a world transcending human experience, taking on mere outer-world appearances that are determined by the consciousness of the subjects, so in the Socialism of Bernstein the Marxian laws have no objective truth, but are mere generalizations of the subjective impulses of the proletariat which produces through its consciousness appearances that it calls doctrines. Bernstein was

[44] *Evolutionary Socialism* (Eng. tr. of *Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus und die Aufgaben der Sozialdemokratie*), New York, B. W. Huebsch, 1912, p. 202.

[45] *Ibid.*, Preface, p. x.

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therefore compelled to set himself up against the Marxian position of the Socialist principles. He cites the words of Marx in *The Civil War In France*:

> "The working classes have no fixed and perfect Utopias to introduce by means of a vote of the nation. . . . They have no ideals to realize, they have only to set at liberty the elements of the new society which have already been developed in the womb of the collapsing bourgeois society." [46]

Against this we find Bernstein saying:

> "I cannot subscribe to the proposition: 'The working class has no ideas to realize'. I see in it rather a self-deception, if it is not a mere play on words on the part of its author." [47]

For Bernstein, the principles of Socialism are based, not on material reality but on subjective idealism; not on the factual *is*, but on the moral *ought*; not on the scientifically determined conclusion of the inevitable overthrow of capitalism as a historic necessity, but on a metaphysical ethical imperative proceeding from an *a priori* idea. For materially determined class consciousness Bernstein accordingly substitutes ideally engendered ethical consciousness. But the ethical is by its nature the all-human, the pan-social. And so we have from Bernstein the plea for the abandonment of the class struggle, for the renunciation of the revolutionary program, for the adoption of a program of slow reform within the framework of capitalism.

In support of his anti-revolutionary principle of beyond-class consciousness, Bernstein brought forward a host of theories of the "harmony economist" type, flagrantly resorting to distortions of Marx and Engels. Thus, he taught that the falling rate of profit is accompanied by a falling rate of exploitation, with the consequent increase in the number of the wealthy, so that the polarization of wealth is steadily declining and the class differences are fast dwindling. Furthermore, Bernstein held, through its acquired franchise, the proletariat in the advanced capitalist countries has emerged from its one-time fatherlandless state into a condition of participating citizenship, into a state of "democratized capital", so that it was no longer true that the workers had only their chains to lose.

Hook the "Marxian" finds it possible, nevertheless, to say:

> "As a matter of fact, however, Bernstein's economic views were a form of immanent criticism. They could all be retained with certain modification within the framework of the Marxian position." [48]

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 204.
[47] *Ibid.*, p. 222.
[48] P. 340 (see note 1).

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How very true to Hookian form! The denial of Marx's fundamental conclusions does not constitute a denial, for, after all, Marx's conclusions are really "tentative and contingent", and so Bernstein's revisionism, it can be reasoned, does not revise, and hence is mere "immanent criticism".

Of the Social Democracy that rejected Marxian internationalism for Bernsteinian chauvinism and delivered the working masses into the hands of the imperialist war-lords, Hook the "Marxian" finds it possible to say:

> "And it was with the heavy consciousness of their duties as citizens that the German Social Democracy voted the war budgets in 1914 for the defence of the potential *Volkstaat* in the actual *Vaterland*." [49]

What clearer apology could one find for the Bernsteinized traitors to Socialism in the parties of the Second International?

But the purpose of Hook is clearly revealed when once again he assigns to Marx the blame for the revisionists of Marxism. This time, however, Engels is made a partner in the guilt. It all came about this way, Hook tells us:

> "Bernstein's great merit lay in his intellectual honesty. He interpreted Marx and Engels as they appeared to him in their sober years—peaceloving, analytical, monocled scholars, devoted to the cause of social reform, with stirring memories of a revolutionary youth." [50]

Thus, in the true tradition of the Second International reformists, Hook, with subtle indirection, ascribing to Bernstein alone his own decadent conception of Marx and Engels, seeks to drag the great revolutionists down to the level of his own opportunism.

This attempt to make Marx appear the author of Bernsteinism is made by Hook with characteristic insidiousness in his article "From Hegel to Marx", published this very year.

Hook cites Marx:

> " 'Theory becomes realized in a people only insofar as it is the realization of its needs.' (*Gesamtausgabe*, I, p. 613)" [51]

And Hook interprets this to mean:

> "The new philosophy will triumph not because it represents objective truth but because it fulfills the *needs* of human beings and the social conditions which generate those needs." [51]

We find here not only a departure from the meaning of Marx's

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 341.
[50] *Ibid.*, pp. 342-3.
[51] *The Modern Quarterly*, Vol. VI, No. 1, p. 54.

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passage, but a conscious distortion of that passage to turn it into a support of the neo-Kantian revisionism.

The word *needs* which Hook underscores to give it a meaning of subjective desire and thus to destroy the scientific value of Marxian theory, means as Marx uses it, an objectively determined necessity arising from a given set of economic-social conditions, that is, from the capitalist form of society.

Marx and Engels clearly stated their position on this point in a passage in the *Communist Manifesto* that is far too celebrated not to be known to Hook:

> "The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer. They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes."

Not the metaphysical theory of needs as idealistic strivings, Messrs. Bernstein and Hook, but the scientific theory of needs in their historical motivation, in terms of their historical movement! The Marxian theory is the theory of the abolition of private property in relation to the inevitable overthrow of capitalism. It represents objective truth precisely because it springs from objective reality expressing itself as the needs of the proletarian class.

The thesis of Sidney Hook is: Since the teachings of Marx represent the subjective needs of the proletariat, they cannot lay claim to objectivity and to the status of a science. For the proletariat is not the entire society; the bourgeoisie, although in a minority, is likewise part of society. The bourgeois interests are definitely not the interests of the proletariat. Marxism does not represent them. Hence we can speak of proletarian class consciousness only as subjective class consciousness and of the proletarian philosophy only as subjective philosophy.

Such an understanding of proletarian class consciousness can come only from a totally undialectic conception of the specific and unique role of the proletariat as a class, of the proletarian revolution, and of the proletarian dictatorship. By coupling in an undifferentiated fashion the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the consciousness of the two classes, their respective interests and historic roles, Hook actually subscribes to the views of the social- and anarcho-fascists who profess to see no difference between the proletarian dictatorship and the fascist dictatorship, who ascribe a motive of self-perpetuation as dominant class to the victorious proletariat and to the proletariat seeking to achieve its victory. The utter falseness of this contention is being demonstrated in the Soviet Union for all the world to see.

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The successful Five Year Plan for Socialist building represents the conscious effortful aim of the proletariat in power to transform its class dictatorship into the *classless society* of Communism in which the proletarian state will, in the words of Engels, "wither away".

But perhaps Hook may question the orthodoxy of the "Leninist Reformation",[52] (the Christian Church parallelism with which he is pleased to mock the Bolshevik Party that leads and directs in the building of Socialism). Let us then open for him the page in the *Communist Manifesto* which, if he is honest, he will admit demonstrates his anti-Marxism. In the *Manifesto* Marx and Engels state:

> "All the preceding classes that got the upper hand, sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. *They have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify*; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property." (Italics mine.—V.J.J.)

Further in the *Manifesto* it is stated:

> "If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms, and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.
>
> "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all."

Need we clearer proof that the position of Sydney Hook is the position of the revisionist Eduard Bernstein and not the position of Marx and Lenin?

IV

Involved in Hook's denial of the objectivity of Marxism is his denial of dialectics in nature. Consistent with his neo-Kantian mode of thinking, he holds the laws of dialectics to be attributes of human consciousness only. Hook reasons as follows: Since Marxism is merely a sociological methodology, Marx could not have applied dialectics outside of the sphere of class consciousness. And since, by Hook's persuasion, class consciousness is subjective consciousness, dialectics cannot be operative in nature, which is outside of sub-

[52] P. 347 (see note 1).

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jectivity or human consciousness. We are therefore enjoined by him against—

> " . . . the illegitimate attempts to extend it [dialectics] to natural phenomena in which human consciousness does not enter." [53]

Such an injunction is quite in consonance with Hook's general design to remove the basis of objectivity from Marxism, to invalidate Marxism as a science.

This denial of the universality of dialectics, this limitation of dialectics to consciousness, is in actuality an admission of non-dialectic, or mechanical, materialism in nature, the materialism, in fact, of eighteenth-century France, of seventeenth-century Thomas Hobbes —the materialism that in every case translated itself into idealism when applied to history. In every case, and in Hook's case. For dialectic materialism cannot admit dialectics in social consciousness unless that dialectics is in correspondence to the dialectic forms of motion in material existence. To speak of independent consciousness-dialectics is to deny the material foundation of consciousness, is to place consciousness before being, is to affirm an idealist foundation of consciousness in the social process, is to bring back the idealist conception of history.

The struggle to affirm the universality of dialectics is therefore the struggle to affirm the materialist conception of history.

Marx, Engels, and Lenin throughout their writings engaged in the struggle for the materialist conception of nature and history. As far back as 1844-1845, in *The German Ideology*, we find Marx and Engels jointly saying:

> "Consciousness can never be anything other than conscious being, and man's being is his real life-process. . . . Wholly in contrast to German philosophy, which descends from heaven to earth, there is here an ascent from earth to heaven. . . . The nebulous abstractions in the brains of men are necessary sublimations of their material life-process empirically establishable and attached to material bases. . . . Not consciousness determines life, but life determines consciousness." [54]

Marx later developed this view in its most classic exposition in the celebrated Preface to his *Critique of Political Economy*.

It was in the struggle against the metaphysical interpretation of nature and history that Engels declared in his *Anti-Duehring*, which Marx read in manuscript and to which he contributed a chapter: [55]

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[53] p. 363 (see Note 1).

[54] *Die Deutsche Ideologie*, ed. by V. Adoratsky, Volksausgabe, Verlag fuer Literatur und Politik, Wien/Berin, 1932, pp. 15-16.

[55] In the 1885 preface to *Anti-Duehring*, Engels writes: "Let me remark at this point. Since the developed viewpoint here employed was for much the

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> "Nature is the proof of dialectics, and it must be said for modern science that it has furnished this proof with very rich materials increasing daily, and thus has shown that, in the last resort, nature works dialectically and not metaphysically. . . . " [56]

It was in this struggle that Lenin spoke of dialectics as

> " . . . the understanding of evolution in its fullest, deepest and most universal aspect, the understanding of the relativity of human knowledge, which gives us a reflection of eternally evolving matter. The most recent discoveries of natural science, radium, the electron, the transmutation of elements, have admirably confirmed the dialectic materialism of Marx. . . . " [57]

Finally, in refutation of Hook's position that Engels and Lenin are revisionists of Marxism for affirming natural dialectics, we have the words of Marx and Engels directed against Bruno Bauer's *Contrasts in Nature and History*:

> " . . . as if these were two sundered 'things', (as if) man did not always have before him historic nature and natural history. . . . " [58]

We have their trenchant words directed against the idealist conception of history:

> "As it separates thought from mind, soul from body, itself from the world, so does it separate history from natural science and industry, so does it see, not in the rude material production on earth, but in the hazy cloud-formations in the skies, the birth-place of history." [59]

We have Marx's clear words in connection with his discussion of the dialectic transition of money into capital in the process of production, in the course of which he states:

> "Here, *just as in the natural sciences*, we find confirmatism of the law discovered by Hegel in his *Logic*, that at a certain point, what

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greater part established and developed by Marx, and only to a slight extent by me, it was a self-understood matter between us that this presentation of mine was not to be issued without his knowledge. I read for him the entire manuscript before publication, and the tenth chapter of the section on economy ('Aus der *Kritischen Geschichte*') was written by Marx and had, merely on account of superficial considerations, to be slightly abridged by me. It was at all times our custom to assist each other mutually in specialized provinces." (*Herrn Eugen Duehrings Umwaelzung der Wissenschaft* [popularly known as *Anti-Duehring*], 11th edition, Berlin, 1928, p. xii.)

[56] *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, Kerr and Co., p. 83. (This celebrated pamphlet is part of *Anti-Duehring*.)

[57] "The Three Sources and Three Constituent Parts of Marxism."

[58] *Die Deutsche Ideologie*, p. 33.

[59] *Die Heilige Familie*, p. 259.

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have been purely quantitative changes become qualitative." [60] (Italics mine.—V.J.J.)

The third edition of Capital, contains at this point the following significant addition by Marx:

"The molecular theory of modern chemistry, first scientifically worked out by Laurent and Gerhardt, rests on no other law." [61]

It is clear from the foregoing that before Hook's injunction against "the illegitimate attempts" to render Marxian dialectics universal, Marx, Engels, and Lenin stand guilty as violators. It is also clear that in the face of Marxian truth as presented by Marx, Engels, and Lenin, Sidney Hook, in *his* role as exponent of Marxian dialectics, stands revealed as a classic type of willful distorter and falsifier of Marxism.

V

The attempt to dislodge the Marxian system from dialectics (or dialectics from the Marxian system) has always been a basic purpose of every type of overt and covert anti-Marxism. Thus, the bitter anti-Marxian and distorter of Socialism, Eugen Duehring, in a diatribe against the "dialectical jargon" of Karl Marx, indulged in a virulent attack on the dialectic law of contradiction, denying the manifestation of the contradictory in objective reality and limiting it to human consciousness alone. Engels singles for attack at the outset of his chapter on dialectics the following words of Duehring:

"The contradictory is a category that can pertain to thought-combination alone but not to any reality. In things there are no contradictions; or, in other words, the law of contradiction is itself the pinnacle of absurdity." [62]

Toward the conclusion of his *Kritische Geschichte* we find Duehring pleading for the merging of bourgeois political economy with Socialism:

"The complete unity of political economy and Socialism cannot, however, support itself solely on the achievements of the newer systems, the German-American economy, *but must seek its strength in a method of approach that leads beyond the isolation of separate viewpoints of system* to an exact and universal foundation of social-economic knowledge and volition." [63] (Italics mine—V.J.J.)

[60] *Capital*, Vol. I, International Publishers, New York, 1929, p. 319.
[61] *Ibid.*
[62] *Anti-Duehring*, p. 118.
[63] *Kritische Geschichte der Nationaloekonomie und des Sozialismus*, Berlin, 1871, p. 589.

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The motive for Duehring's resistance to the dialectic law of contradiction stands in this attitude unmasked. Duehring's defense of the metaphysical law of identity shows itself to be, not a mere piece of innocuous scholastic reasoning, but a subtle preparation for the doctrine of class concord and the evasion of the proletarian revolution. Back of Duehring the anti-dialectician stands Duehring the anti-Socialist, disclosing the two as one and the same.

Confront the first-quoted statement of Duehring with the following passage from Hook, and the source of Hook's ideological sustenance is instantly revealed:

> "Once it [Marxism] is freed from its coquetry with Hegelian terminology and dissociated from the illegitimate attempts to extend it to natural phenomena in which human consciousness does not enter, it offers itself as a fruitful methodological leading principle for investigating the nature of the social process." [64]

In both statements there is an unconcealed sneering at the terminology of dialectics; in both statements there is a denial of the universality of dialectics and an attempt to set up in its place a neo-Kantian principle of the contradictory as a category of human consciousness.

The similarity between the two academicians becomes still clearer when we note the significant fact that Duehring, like Hook, denies to Marx doctrinal contribution, that he speaks, for instance, of "the fragmentary doctrinal attempts of Herr Karl Marx" [65] that in discussing *Capital*, he says:

> "In all these dialectic monstrosities on the conception of value there is not a grain of new theory to be met with." [66]

One must say that this resemblance speaks well for the abiding influence of Herr Eugen Duehring!

VI

If we should seek for an eminent co-philosopher of Sidney Hook on the American scene, we can find him in Max Eastman—the very man with whom Hook is in competition for the honor of being recognized as the instrumentalist *par excellence*. The struggle between Hook and Eastman is in effect nothing but a petty family quarrel among proponents of the specific American bourgeois philosophy. What is there in the following significant statement from Eastman's introduction to his recently published *Capital and Other Writings* that Hook might not have said—has not said?

> "It is important, however, that those young Americans who wish

[64] p. 363 (see Note 1).
[65] *Kritische Geschichte der Nationaloekonomie und des Sozialismus*, p. 522.
[66] *Ibid.*, p. 528.

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> to approach Marx as a teacher—and they all ought to—should not be 'buffaloed' by his philosophic mode of approach. They are very likely to in these days, because those most interested in propagating the ideas of Marx, the Russian Bolsheviks, have swallowed down his Hegelian philosophy along with his science of revolutionary engineering. . . . They [the Russian Bolsheviks] are wrong in scorning our distaste for having practical programs presented in the form of systems of philosophy. In that we simply represent a more progressive intellectual culture than that in which Marx received his education—a culture farther emerged from the dominance of religious attitudes." [67]

Eastman warns the students of Marxism not to be misguided by the Russian Bolsheviks who accept Marxism as a philosophic system; Hook finds no unity in Marx's teachings, calling Engels a deviator for accepting Marxism as a "closed deductive system". Eastman boils Marxism down to "revolutionary engineering"; Hook, to a paraphrase of that expression: to "an illustration of a method of revolutionary criticism". Eastman sees Marxism as the product of a culture that was under "the dominance of religious attitudes"; Hook characterizes it as "a symbol of revolutionary theology" in the Soviet Union, as "a vague social religion" in Germany. Eastman speaks of "the attempt of Marx to know more than is possible to know", and warns the American student of Marxism to "retain that *sceptical poise* (Italics mine—V.J.J.) of the scientific thinker, which is his privilege"; Hook holds that the Marxian conclusions may be rejected, that "they are tentative and contingent"—a commendable application of Dewey's theory of "healthy scepticism". Eastman denies the objective and scientific nature of Marxism, seeing in the opening sentence of the *Communist Manifesto* "that disposition to read one's own interests into the definition of facts, which distinguishes the philosopher from the scientist"; Hook similarly regards Marxism as subjectively motivated and unscientific, admitting it to be effective "not because it represents objective truth but because it fulfills the needs of human beings". And evidently in sympathy with Hook's demurrer at Marx's "coquetry with Hegelian terminology", Eastman lodges his complaint against Marxism "for its Hegelian-metaphysical inheritance and mode of dress."

Really, the quarreling twain turn out to be quite affectionate twins. With this distinction to be noted, however: where the blunter Eastman openly asserts his American bourgeois "we" against the Russian Bolshevik "they", Hook, by attempting to identify instru-

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[67] All Eastman quotations are from his Introduction to Karl Marx's *Capital and Other Writings*, the Modern Library, N. Y.

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mentalism with Marxism, seeks to superimpose that "we" upon the universal Bolshevik "they".

Still another co-ideologist of Sidney Hook appears on the American scene. The Very Reverend A. J. Muste! In a highly laudatory review of Hook's pamphlet *Toward the Understanding of Karl Marx*, this leader of American left social fascism thus puts his endorsement on Hook's position:

> "It is obviously possible on this interpretation to accept the validity and the permanent importance of Marx's method without feeling bound to use him as a Talmud and Bible, and to accept every one of his conclusions." [68]

He likewise concurs with Hook that:

> "Bernstein and other revisionists were right in repudiating Marxism as a finished science and in calling upon the representatives of the social democracy to square their theories with their practice and admit that they were social reformers."[69]

Neither does he find anything to quarrel with when he says that:

> "The error made by the bolshevists, according to Dr. Hook, is that while they have properly laid emphasis on Marxism as a theory of social action, they cling to the notion that Marx elaborates a complete "science of social change'." [70]

Yes—a Marxian after his own heart! None of your Bolshevik insistence on Socialism, proletarian dictatorship, a revolutionary labor movement. Here's a man, thank God, that allows you to be a Marxian in peace without making such exactions upon you!

So warm, indeed, does the Reverend wax over his elective affinity, that he exclaims:

> " . . . and if his interpretation of Marx is not the correct one then it should be. We do not need a cut-and-dried Bible. . . . " [71]

But Hook's closest brother-in-"Marx" is certainly that most eminent of the Menshevist reverends that have descended to minister to the proletarian "flock"—the Socialist Reverend Norman Thomas.

In his *America's Way Out*, for instance, which he offers as "A Program of Democracy", Mr. Thomas almost paraphrases Hook when he says:

> "Marx himself never formulated his theory of the economic interpretation of history in a comprehensive manner. Among his fol-

[68] *Labor Age*, N. Y., September, 1931, p. 27.
[69] *Ibid.*
[70] *Ibid.*
[71] *Ibid.*

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> lowers, on the one hand, it has been pressed back into a kind of metaphysical materialism as against religion. On the other, it has been carefully stated as a dynamic principle of social change acceptable to men with various philosophies." [72]

Not plagiarism, gentle reader, but the common thoughts of workers in the common Revisionist cause!

As may be further seen by the following:

> "Now in so far as the inverted Hegelianism of Marx found expression in the materialistic conception of history or economic determinism it gave men a *useful principle* for understanding past history *and a less sure means of predicting the future. It enables men to explain far better what has been than to foretell what will be the future.*" [73] (Italics mine.—V.J.J.)

In these trying days when there's murmuring in the ranks, when an answer must be given to the awakening rank-and-file who want to know why their Socialist leaders lead away from Socialism, isn't it ingenious to fall on the plan of charging it all to Karl Marx? Verily, I say unto you, and Hook is my prophet: Socialism would be the future, had Marx but been able to foretell what will be the future!

Clearly, Hook's ideological heritage is traceable, not to Marx, Engels, and Lenin, but to those whom Marx, Engels, and Lenin bitterly fought. Hook's "Marxism" is of a kind with the revisionism of Bernstein, Kautsky, Hilferding, Bogdanov, Max Adler, Hillquit, et al. His validation of truth through "reaching" is the smugness-cult of a philistine bourgeoisie that feels it has "arrived". His rejection of knowledge of outcome is the rejection of the revolutionary outcome by the bourgeois class that hopes to keep itself entrenched forever. His pluralistic hypotheses are a return from scientific militant materialism to reactionary idealist experientialism. Politically, it constitutes a denial that the proletarian revolution is a *dialectic necessity* arising from the inherent contradictions of capitalism.

In according to the revolutionary proletarian way out of the capitalist crisis a place among his pluralistic hypotheses, among his many ways out, Hook places it in equal candidacy with the non-revolutionary way out, to which the outstanding claimant is the theory of a permanent status quo that looks to fascism as its prop.

Socialism and fascism are thus made running mates! And our "Marxist" with pragmatist "open-mindedness" bids both runners godspeed. For purposes of precise definition, however, the revolu-

[72] p. 55.
[73] *Ibid.*, p. 136.

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tionary movement has come to call such well-wishing to fascism in phrases of Socialism, social-fascism.

We see, therefore, that Sidney Hook's Pure Methodology is not so pure. The devoid of doctrine is not so devoid. From Hook's "Marxism" the doctrine of Marxism, it is true, is absent; but surely *not absent from it is the doctrine of anti-Marxism.*

Of course, the teachings of Marx must of their nature have their inevitable enemies. And the working class is always the gainer when those that distort Marx stand revealed as anti-Marxists.

VII

To understand the real significance of the psuedo-Marxism under discussion, we must understand the class nature of its manifestation in the present period.

The radicalization of broad sections of the American working class and the leftward turn among the professionalized intellectuals manifested in the course of the deepening economic crisis of capitalism, has brought with it a growing interest in the basic theory of Marxism-Leninism. Fully alert to the situation, the bourgeoisie has not been behindhand in its efforts to misdirect the trends towards Marxism into trends against it. To this end it has operated with the two-fold method of open opposition, vilification, and campaigns of falsehoods, on the one hand, and subtle adulteration and "boring from within", on the other. This second method is studiously employed by the enemy class in a manner especially designed to play on the ideological and psychological prejudices and hangovers of "fair play", "seeing both sides of the question", Hamletic waverings, gentle-mannered academism, and other such "equipments" with which the bulk of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia still remains afflicted in its first steps toward the revolutionary movement.

Not to lose its grip on the newly "Marxized" culture-bearers, its erstwhile retainers whom it still hopes to hold and whom, therefore, it cannot allow to be transformed into a revolutionary ally of the toiling masses, the bourgeoisie finds it advantageous, in moments such as this, to undertake its own "Marxist" education: If Marxism is a sword, let the hilt be in my hand!

Accordingly, if there is a growing interest among the masses of workers and intellectuals in Marxism-Leninism, what can be more strategic, now that it is too late to boycott the subject, than to put forward a safe and dependable assortment of "Marxian" deans who will interpret without upsetting things?

And so we have the bourgeois-groomed presidential candidate on the Socialist Party ticket, Norman Thomas, taking to mouthings of

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"Marxism"—the same Norman Thomas who only yesterday in his *America's Way Out*, wherein he set forth the program of the Socialist Party, dismissed Marx as hopelessly obsolete.

And so our bourgeois promoters turn to Max Eastman, the representative and original champion of Trotsky in the United States, to edit its marketings of Marxism. If *Capital and Other Writings* is to be published, let the author be presented in the Introduction as a hopeless non-American, as a man that was "educated in the atmosphere of German metaphysics . . . " who "never recovered from that German philosophical way of going at things which is totally alien to our minds", whose "German-professorial" mental attitude "seems unnatural to us more sceptical and positivistic Anglo-Saxons". If Marxism is a profitable merchandise, let it be sales-agented by a man who can advertize that he has come "to help the American student get hold of the monumental ideas of Karl Marx, which is his duty, and yet retain that *sceptical poise of the scientific thinker* which is his privilege . . ." (Italics mine—V.J.J.)

If Marxism is to be published, let it be "Marxism" with a vengeance!

As in the publishing houses, so in the magazines. Thus we find *The Modern Quarterly*, *The Symposium*, *The Journal of Philosophy*, filled with a sudden zeal for the promulgation of Marxism. And as interpreter they choose Sydney Hook.

Sidney Hook has recently come to be known in our ranks as one of the many professional intellectuals who came forward in active support of the Communist candidates in the recent election campaign. His name has been associated with pro-Communist declarations in the press, and he officiated as chairman at some of our election campaign functions. He was in that activity part of the broad united front in the election campaign of the Communist Party.

The sector of the united front that counts Hook is the radicalized intellectuals who are being brought by the economic crisis objectively closer to the Communist Party. But with Hook the speaker for the proletarian platform has come Hook the ideologist of the platform of the bourgeoisie, Hook the carrier of the specific philosophy of the American bourgeoisie dressed in phrases of Marxism. Hook's "Marxism" is at bottom of a kind with the true-Yankee "Marxism" of Eastman, with the various American-exceptionalist, Monroe-Doctrine brands of Marxism that have for their aim the segregation of the American working class from the international labor movement, that have for their aim the postulation of exceptional laws of motion for American capitalism and correspondingly exceptional (i.e., non-revolutionary) strategy and tactics for the American working class.

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As such, despite his objective position among the intellectuals drifting toward the revolutionary movement, Hook is subjectively a force pulling away from it. The movement, recognizing the necessity for transforming the lower middle class intellectuals from a reserve of reaction into an ally of the revolutionary proletariat, welcomes and stimulates the present leftward trend among the intellectuals. It is under no illusions that of the intellectuals now coming toward it all will remain or that all will as much as arrive. But that numbers among them will recognize their historic place to be in the ranks of the revolutionary movement and that they will come to identify themselves with the movement, is inevitable. The identification of the intellectuals with the revolutionary movement is dependent, however, on their complete rift with bourgeois ideology and liberalism. They must come face front to the working class; they cannot come with glances lingering behind them. The relationship of the intellectuals as a group with the working class is essentially an alliance. But that alliance can be established only on the basic revolutionary principles of the working class, on the unmodified, unadulterated principles of Marxism-Leninism. Not the workers to the intellectuals, but the intellectuals to the workers is the historic course. Not an alliance in which the working class surrenders or barters a single one of its principles, but an alliance in which its principles are a force of attraction to a class intermediary between it and the enemy class. Only in this alliance will the intellectuals achieve their liberation from their retainership to capitalism, their liberation for working with the proletariat, for helping in the job of the revolution.

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Stalin Develops the Teachings of Marx and Lenin

(From Comrade Manuilsky's Report to the Twelfth Plenum on the Fifteenth Anniversary of the October Revolution)

THE Party and its Leninist Central Committee roused millions of toilers to action, for the struggle to fulfil the Five-Year Plan, acted everywhere as agitators, propagandists and organizers for the fulfilment of the Five-Year Plan. In the struggle for the Five-Year Plan our Party and its Leninist Central Committee still further extended and strengthened its deep-rooted connections with the broad masses of toilers, who, on their own initiative, and under the leadership of the Party, put forward, and in the main have carried out, the slogan of "The Five-Year Plan in Four Years". Historical truth obliges us to mention here the role of the man under whose firm and tried leadership the Party and its Central Committee marched through the difficult mountain pass after the death of Comrade Lenin. It is all the more necessary to mention this for the reason that soon we will celebrate the Fifteenth Anniversary of the October Revolution and a little later the tenth anniversary of the death of Comrade Lenin, which was a severe and irreplaceable loss for us, and for the proletariat and toilers of the whole world.

Comrade Stalin, the true comrade-in-arms and best disciple of Comrade Lenin, led the Party, the working class, and the entire country over all the dangers that we encountered during the past decade, to surmount all the difficulties which stood in our way. Never yet has our Party been so firmly consolidated and united as it is now under the leadership of Comrade Stalin. The entire work of strengthening the internal and international position of the U.S.S.R., the whole of the stupendous work of Socialist construction carried out during the past ten years in the conditions of capitalist encirclement which demanded the greatest Leninist firmness and flexibility, combined with steel-like determination, bears the direct impress of the mind, the will and the actions of Stalin.

Marx and Engels gave to the international proletariat the theory of scientific Socialism—Marxism, and on the basis of analysis of the laws of capitalist development and of the development of the class struggle, revealed the historic mission of the working class as the grave-digger of capitalism and the inevitability of the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of which the working-class, after breaking the resistance of the exploiters, and leading the oppressed masses

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of the whole people, will organize planned socialist industry and prepare the ground for classless socialist society.

Lenin further developed the teachings of Marx and Engels for the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, analyzed the problems of monopolist capitalism, the proletarian dictatorship, the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution, the role of the national-colonial revolutions, the Party and the problem of the successful construction of Socialism in the period of the proletarian dictatorship, and gave to the world proletariat the experience of the first proletarian revolution and the first proletarian dictatorship in the world, leading them through the most dangerous and difficult years of ruin caused by the imperialist and civil wars and of intervention, and at the same time laid firm foundations for the construction of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.. The great name of Lenin is linked with Leninism as Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution.

In the minds of the toilers of our country and of the international proletariat the whole period of Socialist construction and its victory in the U.S.S.R. is linked up with the name of Comrade Stalin. On basis of the law of the uneven development of imperialism, he worked out and carried into operation the Leninist teachings on the building up of Socialism in a single country. In this Stalinist position, which is understood by the whole of the Communst International, the task of preparing the international proletariat for a new round of wars and revolutions is actually being carried out. Under the leadership of Lenin, the C.P.S.U. defeated Menshevism, which stood in the path of the proletarian revolution in Russia; under the leadership of Stalin, in the period of Socialist construction, a decisive blow was struck at the Menshevism of our epoch which sometimes appears in the form of counter-revolutionary Trotskyism and sometimes in the form of the Right opportunist deviation.

In the struggle against these deviations, Stalin not only successfully defended Marxism-Leninism from Trotskyist and Right opportunist distortions. In his reports, speeches and articles he developed the teachings of Marx and Lenin and adapted them to the first phase of Communism. (Socialism.) Stalin's articles, such as *The Year of Great Change*, his speeches as the one delivered at the Conference of Agrarian Marxists, or the one delivered at the Conference of Business Managers on the mastery of technique, Stalin's Six Points—are not only directives for our Party, not only historical landmarks of our achievements and victories, they are documents of tremendous theoretical importance for the whole of the Comintern, documents whose significance is not confined to our country, or to our times.

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Spinoza and Marxism*

By M. MITIN

IN the article, "Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism", Lenin wrote: "Throughout the civilized world the teaching of Marx has called forth the greatest hostility and hatred of bourgeois science, official and liberal, which discerns in Marxism something akin to a harmful sect." Lenin further emphasized that bourgeois science can necessarily have no other attitude toward Marxism, because bourgeois science defends wage slavery, whereas Marxism has declared a merciless struggle against capitalist exploitation.

Today, when all the contradictions of capitalism have been sharpened to the extreme, when the relative stabilization has ended, when we enter into the period of a new round of gigantic conflicts btween classes and states, the struggle of the proletariat against capitalism also in the ideological field is of great significance. The fear and furious hatred which the development and diffusion of dialectical materialism have aroused in the capitalist camp may be judged by the many books which have appeared in Europe during the last two-three years. The booklet by the "left" social fascist, Max Adler, *A Text-book for a Materialist Understanding of History*, published in 1931, is idealistic from beginning to end, and is especially directed against Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Adler takes the viewpoint of Kant and Mach and wages war against Lenin's elaborations upon dialectical materialism. Max Adler fulfills the class order of the bourgeoisie by villifying materialism in every possible manner, opening a way to reaction embodied in the idealistic outlook.

Spengler, the half forgotten, during the period of partial stabilization of capitalism, the glorifier of the decline of Europe and of the downfall of bourgeois culture, is again emerging as the supreme thinker of the contemporary bourgeois intelligentsia. Pessimism, forebodings of the inevitable doom of bourgeois culture, and general hopelessness have indeed been expressed by Spengler with great clarity.

The capitalist world is the arena of the most ruthless class struggle, waged in the economic, political and ideological fields. The representatives of the doomed class are carrying on a struggle against

* Abridged translation from the Russian by B. Brady.

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the victorious Marxian ideology. They revive the most reactionary and mystical aspects of old philosophical doctrines. In this respect, the recently published pamphlet, *Away from Materialism*, by Count Kudenhof-Kalergy, a member of the highest imperialist circles in Germany, is extremely significant. The avowed purpose of the pamphlet is to combat the spread of materialism. Kudenhof-Kalergy declares frankly that the struggle against Soviet Russia presumes also a struggle against materialism. He writes: "Materialism, the intellectual domination of which, after a short triumph, had been in decline, has received a potent ally on the border of Europe in Soviet Russia." The "illustrious" Count further avers: "Since nothing exists for the materialists except matter—neither God nor ideas—every obligation to them is humbug, every moral need trickery, and all ethics fraud. Other people to them are only a means for enhancing their pleasures of life. They regard other people just as they do good cigars, wine and viands, and also as obtrusive flies and poisonous snakes." This pamhplet is indeed an example of hypocrisy and bigotry which knows no bounds. The very fact that this "illustrious" count was compelled to take to his pen and write a special pamphlet against materialism, is evidence of the tremendous growth of the materialist outlook and of the development of the class consciousness of the proletariat and the broad toiling masses.

In such circumstances, when the struggle for materialism against militant reaction throughout the world is our most important task, when the struggle against what Lenin called the "diplomatically accredited lackeys of clericalism" constitutes an integral part of our general struggle against capitalist slavery, the tercentenary of the birth of Spinoza, that towering philosopher of the modern age and outstanding materialist and atheist, should serve to strengthen our work in extending the offensive of the Leninist philosophy along the entire front.

The philosophy of Spinoza, like any system of philosophy, is a product of its time. Holland of the seventeenth century, the country of the philosopher's birth, was a country in which capitalism was relatively highly developed. By the seventeenth century Holland had already experienced its bourgeois revolution, and prior to that, in the sixteenth century, a powerful revolutionary Communist movement of which Thomas Muenzer was the leader. Holland in the seventeenth century was already in the stage of relatively "peaceful" capitalist development, with commerce and handicrafts in the flower, and machine production just evolving.

In *Capital* and elsewhere, Marx devotes considerable attention to the character of the economic development of seventeenth century Holland. He emphasizes that seventeenth century Holland, just as

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eighteenth century France, was a model manufacturing country. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Marx said, "machines were invented in Germany which were only put into use in Holland". During this period Holland was a country with a tremendously developed merchant capital and a vast colonial system. Marx pointed out that the "history of colonial administration of Holland, the model capitalist nation during the seventeenth century, 'is one of the most extraordinary relations of treachery, bribery, massacre, and meanness'." (Marx quotes from *History of Java and its dependencies*, by Thomas Stamford Raffles, London, 1871. Tr.) Being a developed capitalist country, Holland of that period was also a center of science, philosophy and art.

Spinoza vividly reflected the ideology of the bourgeoisie of his time, the ideology of the advanced and radical aspirations of the Dutch bourgeoisie. He was the greatest scholar in his day. His philosophical system—a further development of sixteenth and seventeenth century materialism—is a synthesis of the development of the natural sciences, mathematics and mechanics of that period.

The bourgeois professors and learned historians variously falsify the facts regarding the history of philosophy, distorting and ignoring the great materialists and fighters against clericalism and idealism. The fate of the philosophy of Spinoza is extremely instructive in this respect. The philosophical works of this great materialist thinker, when they appeared in the seventeenth century, were met with the fiercest attacks by churchmen and all reactionaries. Priests and idealists of all brands denounced them with bitterness and fury. The champions of religion launched a regular crusade against them. The Jesuitic reaction had them proscribed, burned and destroyed. Later, however, a striking change occurred. The ideologists of the bourgeoisie, after the victory of capitalism over feudalism, began to count Spinoza among the idealists. This is how the tradition passed into history of interpreting the philosophy of Spinoza from the viewpoint of idealism.

Spinoza was one of the most important materialists of the modern age, although his materialism was not thoroughly consistent. Feuerbach, who called Spinoza the "Moses of modern freethinkers and materialists", revealed the limitations of Spinoza's materialism when he described it as "theological materialism, a negation of theology, but a negation which still professes a theological standpoint".

The basis of Spinoza's philosophy is his analysis of substance which he calls God. What Spinoza meant by this concept was shown by the question which Feuerbach asked and answered: "What does Spinoza mean when he speaks (logically or metaphysically) of substance and (theologically) of God? Nothing else but Nature."

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The concept of substance in the philosophy of Spinoza was the basis of innumerable controversies and entirely contradictory interpretations in the history of philosophy. Bourgeois historiography, in its war against materialism, has taken the "theological lumber" as a basis of Spinoza's philosophy.

It is noteworthy that the question of Spinoza's philosophy, especially Spinoza's concept of substance, was the object of polemics between the so-called Menshevik idealists and the mechanicists, in which both held erroneous positions.

Deborin and his pupils, following the practice of contemporary bourgeois philosophers to gloss over the idealistic elements in Spinoza's materialism, make Spinoza a thoroughly consistent materialist, nay almost a dialectical materialist and Socialist, whose "theological lumber" plays absolutely no role. Of course, such an evaluation of Spinoza's philosophy is closely bound up with the idealistic nature of the revision of Marxian philosophy by the Deborin group. The mechanicists, Axelrod and Varyash, on the other hand, were generally guided by bourgeois historians in their polemics about Spinoza. According to them, Spinoza's entire materialism is nothing but strict and consistent determinism, overlooking the fact that determinism in itself is not yet materialism, even though it is intimately related to it.

Marx and Engels revealed the essential meaning of Spinoza's philosophy when they pointed out that his substance is *metaphysically disguised nature*. They stressed the metaphysical, passive character of Spinoza's philosophy, his, so to speak, contemplative materialism, at the same time indicating the great revolutionary significance of Spinoza's philosophy. Engels especially emphasized Spinoza's famous proposition that nature itself has a cause and requires no supernatural causes for its existence, whereby Spinoza dealt a decisive blow to all idealistic and theological systems.

The history of materialism and atheism is associated with the name of Spinoza. Spinoza was the greatest atheist of the modern age. In his works, especially in the "Theological-Political Treatise", he develops systematic and consistent criticism of religion and the bible.

Just as in his materialism so in his atheism Spinoza is not fully consistent. Eighteenth century French militant materialism, in this respect, is immeasurably superior to Spinoza's materialism. Nonetheless, we must not close our eyes to the truly tremendous and revolutionizing significance which the philosophy of Spinoza had and still has in our day.

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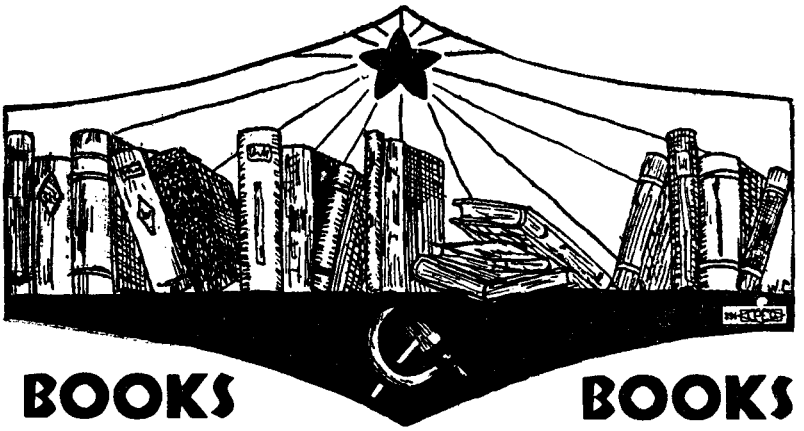

A BOURGEOIS CRITIC ATTACKS PHILOSOPHIC IDEALISM

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF MODERN SCIENCE,

by C. E. M. JOAD. The Macmillan Co. $3.75

Reviewed by MILTON HOWARD

The general world crisis of capitalism is increasingly reflected in the world of science, where it takes many forms. Concretely, it is manifested in the widespread unemployment of thousands of trained technicians, engineers, etc., giving rise to the agonized cry of the bourgeoisie that "there are too many technicians, too many engineers", etc. Theoretically, the crisis is revealed in the promulgation by leading scientists of reactionary philosophies, supposedly based on their scientific discoveries, in the systematic attempts to undermine the validity and prestige of the scientific method, in a widespread denial of obtaining dependable knowledge of the world, all culminating in an unholy intimate alliance of science, on the one hand, with religious mysticism, fideism (reliance upon faith), and open political reaction on the other.

For example, Bertrand Russell describes the mathematician as one "who does not know what he is looking for, and does not know what he is talking about"; also as one "who knows more and more about less and less." No doubt, Russell had himself in mind, for the engineers who built Magnitogorsk and Dnieprostroi had a different conception of mathematics.

As the ideological crisis develops, the class connections of science become more and more exposed. For example, the great authority of Sir Arthur Keith, British paleontologist and anthropologist, is eagerly used by the bourgeoisie to find a "natural" justification for war. Similarly, the reputation of Robert Millikan as a physicist is deliberately used by the American bourgeoisie to "fight atheism and Bolshevism". Recently Millikan was given the facilities of a nation-wide radio hook-up for this purpose.

The American Association of Chemical Engineers, at its recent conference, considered that one of its main tasks was to prove that engineers are not to blame for the paralysis of the forces of production and the resulting unemployment and stating that monopoly capitalism has reached a stage where science must begin to apologize for its existence.

The world-famous British Association for the Advancement of Science at

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its last meeting concluded hopelessly that in spite of all its blessings, science is responsible for the world's misery. "The engineer's gifts," it complained, "have been grievously abused. . . . The command of nature has been put into man's hands before he knows how to command himself." The conclusion which this bourgeois Society for the Advancement of Science obviously implies is that we must put an end to the advancement of science, until "man knows how to command himself". And the Economist of the National City Bank echoes piously that we must go back to the Bible to the "wise old prophet who said 'With all thy getting get understanding'." Compare this helpless mysticism (of the historically reactionary bourgeoisie) with the proud utterance of Francis Bacon, materialist philosopher of the *rising* bourgeoisie, "Knowledge is power", power to transform nature for the uses of man.

These examples can be easily multiplied. The most significant evidence of natural crisis, however, is the rise of mysticism and idealism in the ranks of some of the world's leading physicists, such as Eddington, Jeans, Russell, Compton, Millikan Planck, and others and the energetic attempts of the bourgeois press, the universities, the churches to popularize their reactionary philosohpies. Everywhere the priests and the university philosophers, those "scientific salesmen of theology" (Lenin), proclaim the end of materialism, the end of the long warfare between science and religion, the compatibility of science and God, etc. "See," they cry, "even these great scientists no longer accept the doctrines of materialism; even they can prove the existence of God by higher mathematics". That is why it is important to expose the falsity of these "scientific" philosophies.

In this task Joad's book can be useful. Joad is an English bourgeois philosopher who has no understanding of Marxism. But one thing he does know, and that is that the much-touted theories of Russell, Jeans, Eddington, etc., will not stand up under examination. We shall see that although Joad demonstrates the flimsy basis of their idealism, he himself falls into the same idealist obscurantism as that for which he attacks them. Joad shows that the essential doctrines of Eddington, Jeans, Russell and the other "physical" idealists can be reduced to the following propositions:

1. That the familiar world of sense experience is not objectively real, but in some sense is a product of the observer's mind.
2. That the world of modern physicis is not objectively real, but is in some sense a product of the scientists' reasoning.
3. That facts established by scientfic investigation can be ultimately analyzed into mere constructions of the mind.
4. The plain man does not perceive what he thinks he perceives, and scientific discoveries do not truly represent the nature of what is.

Of course the overwhelming reputation of these doctrines is given by the whole history of human practice, by the development of technology and industry. Long ago Marx in his Theses on Feuerbach correctly stated that: "The question if objective truth is possible to human thought is not a theoretical but a practical question. In practice man must prove the truth, that is, the reality and force in his actual thoughts. The dispute as to the reality or non-reality of thought which separates itself (from) 'the praxis' (practice), is a purely scholastic question."

Marx, in a letter to Ruge, March 13, 1843, wrote: "Feuerbach's aphorisms are wanting in this respect, that he refers too much to Nature, and too little to politics. *But it is only through their unity that present day philosophy can achieve truth.*" (Our emphasis.—M.H.)

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Since Joad is not a dialectical materialist, he does not know this. He attacks these ideas in a formal, abstract manner, a method which conceals within itself the same philosophic idealism as that which it attacks. As far as they go, however, Joad's contentions are correct. He points out at once that the conclusions of Eddington, Russell and the rest are not *scientific* conclusions, but that they are, what is quite different, only *philosophic interpretations* of scientific discoveries. These interpretations he makes clear are not something new, but they "bear a strong family likeness to the philosophies of objective idealism," and the objections against the metaphysical methods whereby these philosophic conclusions are reached "are to be regarded merely in the light of special applications of those objections which have generally been thought to have weight against idealistic monism". (p. 115)

Attacking the great philosophic authority accorded by the bourgeoisie to men who have achieved scientific prominence in special fields, Joad correctly notes that, "there does not appear to be any ground for supposing that the fact that these metaphysical doctrines are put forward by scientists entitles them to some *special* claim upon our attention, to which their philosophical merits might not by themselves entitle them". (p. 115)

Joad demonstrates that the contention of Eddington, Jeans, Russell, et al., that the discoveries of science are mere constructions of the scientist's mind, and that therefore do not only reflect reality, *is itself based on scientific discovery*. Joad proves that these bourgeois philosophers *are using scientific evidence to discredit the validity of science*. He thus demonstrates that contemporary "scientific" idealism is logically self-refuting.

He then considers Betrand Russell's theory of "neutral monism". This theory asserts that both mind and matter are different forms of a more fundamental stuff. To a Marxist it is apparent at first glance that this theory is a form of idealism, for it denies the primacy of matter. In a clever argument Joad demolishes this theory and demonstrates how it leads to "physiological solipsism", a theory which asserts that we can be certain only of our own existence. He concludes, therefore, "that the *world of common experience* is the datum from which physics starts, and the criterion by which he determines the validity of the theoretical structures which he raises. It is therefore presupposed as *real and objective throughout*". (p. 46) (Our emphasis.—M.H.)

Joad correctly reaffirms that "physics has developed out of common-sense knowledge by gradual transition which can be historically traced. *It is in essence an extension and refinement of common-sense knowledge.* [Our emphasis.] This being so, it cannot, it is obvious, be used to impugn the validity of the knowledge upon which it is based and from which it springs without impugning itself". Unless perceptual knowledge gives us true information about an independent and external world, physics itself cannot be true; therefore, physics itself cannot be used to show that perceptual knowledge is not a true reflection of reality. "Yet it is precisely this conclusion," says Joad, "which physics is invoked to support, for if Mr. Russell (and the rest of the "physical" idealists—M.H.) is right, there is no common perceived world, and the only events we know are those in our own heads, the properties of which are strictly mathematical." (p. 106)

Thus, Joad's book is an important bourgeois attack on the structure of idealism built up in the last decade by the leading bourgeois physicists, and so eagerly seized upon by every agency of cultural reaction.

We have said that the political essence of these "scientific" theories is re-

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action. The reason is that they represent an attempt to attack science at its foundations, by undermining the materialist, objective character of scientific knowledge. They are reactionary because they deny the cognizability of the external world. It is clear that these theories are the ideological reflection of the instability of capitalism to use the available productive forces, and reflects the parasitic character of monopoly capitalism in stemming the development of these forces. Recognition of this fact must constitute the starting point of any fully adequate criticism of all current "scientific" idealisms. The source of Joad's failure is his failure to recognize this, and makes his attack on bourgeois idealism inadequate.

Joad himself is a bourgeois philosopher. True, he attacks the idealism of Eddington, Jeans, Russell, etc., but he does not attack them from the standpoint of Marxism, from the standpoint of dialectical materialism, which considers all science and philosophy, however abstract, however "pure", however seemingly distant from technology and human practical acivity, as part *of the whole material process of the "reproduction of social life".* (Marx.) And so, after attacking the idealism of modern bourgeois scientists, he is forced to erect an idealist system of his own. Here is an example of what the bourgeois critic of physical idealism is capable: "The experience that the mystic enjoys may be interpreted as a direct awareness of reality conceived as value. . . . If I am right in my suggestion that mystical experience is awareness of a new order of reality (!), then the essence of it is incommunicable. Nor, if he were wise, would the mystic seek to communicate it." (p. 32) Also, "It is so longer the case that if science is true, religion is not. . . . " (p. 15) In this connection we can do no better than to quote Lenin: "God," Lenin wrote, "is primarily a complex of ideas which result from the overwhelming oppression of man through external nature and class slavery;—of ideas which *fasten* this slavery to him, and which try to neutralize the class struggle. *Even the most refined, well-intentioned defense or justification of the idea of God is a justification of reaction, a justification of the slavery of the masses.*" (Reviewer's emphasis.)

The inability of Joad to transcend the limitations of idealism in spite of his attack on the idealist theories of leading bourgeois scientists, is very instructive, for it is typical of the historical situation of bourgeois philosophy as a whole. The tremendous development of science itself necessitates a thorough revision of its philosophic basis. The mechanical materialism of the 19th century science is inadequate, not only to explain the history of society, but it has been found inadequate to explain the new discoveries in atomic physics, etc. The revival of reactionary idealism is, therefore, a symptom both of the development of science and of the urgent necessity for a revaluation of its philosophic basis. The development of science has reached a stage where it must adopt the dialectical materialism of the proletariat or be increasingly incapable of development. As the legal superstructure is hampering the productive forces, so bourgeois philosophy is hampering the development of science. The essential character of the philosophic crisis was revealed by Lenin:

"In a word, the 'physical' idealism of today, just as the 'physiological' idealism of yesterday merely signifies that one school of naturalists in one branch of science have succummbed to reactionary philosophy, without being able to rise directly and immediately above metaphysical materialism and to arrive at dialectic materialism. Modern physics has made and will continue to make this step, but it reaches the only true method and the only true philosophy of natural science, not directly but through zigzag progress, not

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consciously but instinctively, not clearly aware of its 'final goal' but continually drawing nearer to it, through groping, vacillating, even retrogressive motion. Modern physics is in a state of confinement; it is giving birth to dialectical materialism. The child-birth is painful. Besides a living being, it inevitably brings forth certain dead products, refuse which should be sent where it belongs. To the category of such refuse belongs the entire school of 'idealistic physics'. . . . " *

It is only in the Soviet Union where the power of capital has been destroyed by the proletarian dictatorship, that science can expand unhampered by ideological and material fetters.

"It is for this very reason that science in this country, descending from the metaphysical spaces above the clouds, joins in the great problems of socialist reconstruction. It is granted quite unlimited possibilities of development and becomes the leading principle of the whole progress of further construction. While modifying the whole of life, it modifies also itself, starting with the grand remodelling of all scientific disciplines upon the basis of new methods, of a new monism of all the branches of science. It does not isolate itself from the masses of the workers like a priestly caste; it does not become a hostile force that carries new hardships and privations to the millions of the workers as the involuntary results of its achievements; but on the contrary, it draws ever closer to these masses, steadily obtaining reinforcements from their ranks, and organically joining with the masses is the struggle for common aims and purposes. In this way, it acquires entirely new forces, and opens entirely unprecedented perspectives. The prognosis of Marx and Engels rises more and more clearly, that of the passing of humanity from the reign of necessity into the reign of liberty, where not the machine nor the product governs the man, but the man governs the machine and the product. There is still a difficult road ahead, it will still require a good struggle and many sacrifices, but there is no other way, and overcoming all the obstacles and difficulties, the human race will enter into this world of free and joyous labor by the aid of the subdued forces of nature and of its steel slaves—machines." †

CLASS-ICAL CULTURE

THE REVOLT OF THE MASSES, *by* JOSE ORTEGA Y GASSET. Translator anonymous. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1932.

Reviewed by W. PHELPS

In *The Revolt of the Masses* Jose Ortega y Gasset has rounded out most of the theoretical props of capitalism with a number of confusions and slanders of his own. It would require a volume to refute all of his fallacies and distortions, but this is made unnecessary by the fact that all of these fallacies are unified by his basic attitudes: an apology for capitalism and a condemnation of the revolutionary movement. The argument is carried on a cultural level, in semi-philosophical and inexact literary terms, rather than on a political, economic level. This does not make its argument more imposing; on the contrary, it defines its sources and its sphere of influence. The defenses of capi-

* *Materialism and Empirio Criticism*—Lenin, p.

† Professor M. Rubinstein in *Science at the Cross Roads.*

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talism, common to fascist and social democratic theory, are assimilated into the vocabulary and turns of thought of a modern school of literary criticism (of which Ortega y Gasset is a leading representative), with an eye to convincing those members of the intelligentsia who are addicted to the artistic and philosophical values of the bourgeoisie.

As might be expected, the book has been recommended by Wall Street and two of its chief agencies. *The Wall Street Journal* proclaimed the book to be "of the first importance in aiding the reader to an understanding of the fundamental causes of the world's distress". The editor of the *New York Times* Book Review, J. D. Adams, said, "This is a profound book and one that is vigorous from the first page to the last. . . . The reader will find no more stimulating fare in a dozen publishing seasons." [1] And the Catholic Church blessed the book by including it in its white list.

Despite his obscurantism and distortion of fact, the political, economic, metaphysical, aesthetic ideas of Ortega y Gasset dovetail into one another, like all the other ideologies cooked in the pot of capitalism. Politically, he favors a strong state administered by those "qualified" to rule, to quell the workers who egotistically challenge its beneficence. In fact, he expects that the workers themselves will clamor for "someone to command" them. Under capitalism, this strong state, administered by "someone to command", is an instrument of the ruling class for the suppression of the working class. But the revolting workers, instead of vaguely clamoring for "someone to command them", will follow their own *real* leaders, the Communist Parties in every country, toward a dictatorship of the proletariat the only road for creating a classless society. Metaphysically, he espouses an idealist theory of possibilities of choice in every action, ignoring the material bases of the possibilities and of the choice. His ethics consists of a system of duties and commands imposed upon man. Under capitalism, of course, these ethical principles are bourgeois principles derived from the economic interests of the bourgeoisie. In aesthetics, he champions (especially in his earlier works in literary criticism) modern abstract art, denies the connection of art with society and class, and asserts the independence of art from its audience. These criteria for art are false because they fail to account for the social and class sources of art content and art forms and for the effect, in turn, of art on social behavior. Moreover, these idealist criteria serve the bourgeoisie by cloaking the class struggle and by seeking to perpetuate bourgeois prejudices. Only Marxism can properly explain the class nature of art.

The political activity of Ortega y Gasset is the central part of his life, around which his ideas are built, and in relation to which they have their real meaning. In the preface to the book, written by the translator (who chooses to remain anonymous), Ortega y Gasset is called "The Father of the Spanish Republic". At present he is an active member of Parliament. The role of social fascism in Spain to head off the workers' revolution is well known. And now, very appropriately, the Catholic Church has blessed Ortega y Gasset's paternity of this regime.

But the most significant function of the book is to discredit the cultural possibilities and the cultural achievements of the proletariat. Civilization and culture are identified with bourgeois society, while the rising proletariat ("the mass mind") is accused of reducing this "splendid" civilization of "the qualified minority" to barbarism and anarchism. "If that human type ["the mass man"] continues to be master in Europe, thirty years will suffice to send our

[1] Both of these quotations are printed on the jacket of the book.

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continent back to barbarism. Legislative and industrial technique will disappear with the same facility with which so many trade secrets have disappeared." This prophetic observation is supported by the trite idealist theory that culture is the product of a few great minds. The reactionary character of this idea is made evident by Marx's analysis of the relation of culture (including, of course, "legislative and industrial technique") to society. "The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation, on which rise legal and political superstructures. . . . The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness." [1] And Ortega y Gasset's fear that "legislative and industrial technique" (and culture, in general) will disappear when "the masses revolt" is a corollary of his conception of culture. In reality, "industrial technique" is now declining under capitalism. The explanation was first given by Marx. "At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production. . . . From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then comes the period of social revolution." [2] The proletariat brings into being "new higher relations of production" which give a new vitality to industry, science and art. But Ortega y Gasset lets the cat out of the bag, revealing the economic, class motives behind his assertion, when he says, "There is no culture where economic relations are not subject to a regulating principal to protect interests involved." Since these interests are bourgeois economic interests, the culture which he seeks to perpetuate is nothing but bourgeois culture for which Ortega y Gasset is such a notable apologist.

To retain the belief that culture will disappear with the death of the bourgoisie as a class, it is necessary to blind oneself to the magnificent cultural and industrial achievements of the Soviet Union: the successful completion of the Five Year Plan, the abolition of illiteracy, the wide participation of the workers in all cultural activities, and the high level of performance in all the arts.

Ortega y Gasset also undertakes to refute Marx, with more zeal than logic, however. To the usual arguments of fascism and social democracy he adds a few fallacies of his own invention. As usual, he argues by assertion instead of proof. But the zeal of his argument is a poor guise for his desperation; in fact it is a symbol of this desperation and fear of the rising workers. For, just after "refuting" Marx, he warns the too "tranquil" bourgeoisie of the dangers of Communism. "Because now indeed is the time when victorious, overwhelming Communism may spread over Europe." In fact, he fears that the success of the Five Year Plan might inspire the workers of the other European countries with the "zest of enterprise", as though it were some plague which might spread over Europe. Ortega y Gasset might be interested to learn that "zests of enterprise" do not spread like plagues. They spread when their economic bases are known and when objective conditions are ripe, as they now are, for their reception by a revolutionary proletariat. Besides, the description of what is now taking place in Russia as a "zest of enterprise" (often made, too, by social democracy in its "charitable" moments) conceals the fact that this "zest of enterprise" has been made possible by the release of

[1] Preface to *Introduction to Critique of Political Economy.*
[2] *Ibid.*

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the forces of production from the fetters imposed upon them by the property relations of capitalism. The Soviet Union is an example of the successful practice of Marxism-Leninism to the rising workers of the capitalist countries. That Ortega y Gasset is aware of this is revealed by his plan to unify Europe into an anti-Soviet state, and to create a new moral code, a new "program of life" to combat the growth of Communism. This is necessary because by his own admission, bourgeois "politics, law, art, morals, religion, are actually passing through a crisis are at least temporarily bankrupt". In this new program he calls for respect and enthusiastic support of "qualified" leaders by the people. This suavely phrased program is a thin veil for a plea for fascist dictatorship.

The logic of Ortega y Gasset is weak and collapses easily under the attacks of Marxism. But its significance is far in excess of any consideration of its logical value. The book is symptomatic of the decay of bourgeois culture and of the attempt to enroll the forces of intellectual reaction under the ideology of fascism. It is an attempt to head off the increasingly rapid movement of sections of intellectuals to the left by appealing to their literary and philosophical affiliations with the bourgeoisie, and by distorting the facts of Marxism and the achievements of the Soviet Union. It is the cultural preparation for fascism and for intervention. The major elements of the capitalist propaganda against Communism of the last fifteen years are here translated into cultural terms.

The book is one of a large number of similar cultural attacks on the Soviet Union and on the proletariat of the rest of the world. It is to be considered together with such books as *The Decline of the West* and *Man and Technics*, by Oswald Spengler, and *In Defense of the West*, by Henri Massis. In America the attempt to consolidate the forces of reaction under fascism is not so far advanced nor so explicit as in Europe, but that it has already begun is shown by such works as *Fear and Trembling* by Glenway Wescott. Also, the reactionary, romantic criticism of Joseph Wood Krutch is rapidly flowering into fascist theory in the field of art, with consequent political attacks on Communism (which Krutch has already made in various magazine articles). But the core for fascist doctrine in the United States is being supplied by the humanists, under the leadership of Irving Babbit and Paul Elmer More. The objective role of critics like Krutch is to attract those modern literary men who have no respect for the academicism and pedantry of the humanists.

But what Ortega y Gasset has forgotten is that "the revolt of the masses" is creating a revolt of many intellectuals against the culture which produces such reactionary tripe as Ortega y Gasset is trying to market, and that they are allying themselves in ever larger numbers with the workers.

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